

Evaluation Form

Competitive,
Evaluated Friends, and
Novice Categories

2023



**Communities
in Bloom**

**Collectivités
en fleurs**

Saskatchewan

Program Disclaimer

Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (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. This will also include any resulting activity or events related to participation in the CiB program.



Community: Eston

Province: Saskatchewan

Category: Competitive

CiB recognizes efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change which is reflected in several criteria including:

Environmental Action; Preservation of Natural Heritage; Tree Management and Landscape

Community Appearance	111.50	/	150.00
Environmental Action	115.50	/	150.00
Heritage Conservation	115.50	/	150.00
Tree Management	125.00	/	175.00
Landscape	155.50	/	200.00
Plant and Floral Displays	143.00	/	175.00
	Total		766.00 / 1000.00

Percentage: 77%

Bloom rating: 4 Blooms

Bloom rating: Provincial, National and International Participants

Up to 55% 1 bloom	56% to 63% 2 blooms	64% to 72% 3 blooms	73% to 81% 4 blooms	>82% 5 blooms
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Mention: Beautiful and Diverse Floral Displays

Representative (s) of Community

Name: Val Mohan Function: Communities in Bloom

Name: Edna Williams Function: Communities in Bloom

Name: _____ Function: _____

Judges

Name: Judy Bishop Name: Cathy Joyner

Evaluation date:

July 25, 2023

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Evaluation is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community.
- Evaluation is also adjusted to match the capacity of a community population to the achievements in all criteria – i.e. evaluate what they do (achieve) with what they have (population/ resources).
- 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, Business Improvement Areas (BIA), 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 including condos and co-ops

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.

GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Congratulations on your 23rd Anniversary in the Communities in Bloom Program and maintaining a 4 Bloom rating! Thank you for the hospitality, flexibility, and comprehensive tour around town. We appreciated the opportunity to meet with the CAO and a Town Councillor in advance of the tour to get their perspective on strategic priorities, achievements, and challenges. It was also beneficial to include CiB committee members in this meeting and at lunch to provide their input.

The ongoing dedication and efforts of the CiB Committee to enhance the community is noteworthy. The Committee continues to display the same fortitude (stamina, determination, endurance, credibility, and passion) that was highlighted as a Special Mention in the 2018 CiB Evaluation Report. We appreciated hearing how you have added mini-Christmas trees in the planters by the gopher and the "free ice cream cone" contest is creative and engages the community. The recruitment of a new member is a positive sign, and we wish you well in your continued efforts to expand your committee.

Eston has been challenged by another year of drought conditions, businesses closing, staff vacancies and difficulty in contracting with companies to complete projects. Despite the challenges experienced and their impacts (including on this evaluation), we hope that the CiB committee, the town and its residents remain committed to CiB and the concept of Growing Great Places Together!

Despite the challenges, your CiB committee continues to be exemplary, the pride of residents in Eston is evident and the Town continues to do the best it can and has completed some major projects. The most significant accomplishment is the completion and official opening of the Water Treatment Plant. The Main Grandstand at Reaburn Field has also been painted and refurbished. Efforts continue in planting and nurturing new trees.

The floral displays on Main Street and by the gopher continue to be a highlight. The hanging baskets, planters and pocket gardens are beautiful, vibrant, and well-maintained. Centennial Park is such a welcoming area and so tastefully landscaped. The Fairy Garden is whimsical.

The Town of Eston establishes priorities on a yearly basis and your efforts to share these priorities with the community is commendable. We did see on your Town website that the Official Community Plan is dated 2017 and would suggest it be reviewed to ensure it is current and relevant.

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE		
Community appearance reflects an overall effort by the municipality, businesses, institutions and the residents throughout the community to create great first impressions and a sense that there is continuous attention and upkeep to critical elements of a community that benefit quality of life and economic vitality. 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.		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Gateway Impressions First impressions of the community including gateway/entrance landscape treatments	10	7
Overall Impressions Order, cleanliness, curb appeal and first impressions	10	7
Anti-litter/Graffiti Prevention and Removal Community anti-litter/graffiti awareness programs	10	9
Regulations Effective bylaws, programs and policies and enforcement; litter control, private property maintenance by-laws, vandalism, graffiti prevention and eradication, graffiti removal kits to residents	10	7.5
Asset Appearance Including public green infrastructure: parks, streetscapes (sidewalks, planters, urban signage, and furniture such as benches, litter, and recycling containers etc.)	10	7.5
Municipal Properties Appearance Visual appeal and condition of municipal buildings and municipal owned properties	10	8
Business and Institutions		
Overall Impressions Curb appeal, order, and cleanliness	15	11
Site Conditions Condition of buildings (exterior maintenance), grounds, sidewalks, and parking lots	15	11
Furniture/Amenities Appearance Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter, and recycling containers	5	4
Residential		
Overall Impressions Curb Appeal, order, and cleanliness	20	13
Property Conditions Condition of buildings, grounds, and yards	15	11
Community Involvement		
Public Participation In community, neighbourhood or individual streets, clean-up programs, activities, and annual maintenance (including promotion, organization, innovations involving youth and seniors, etc.)	10	8
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses service groups, and institutions for community clean-up programs.	10	7.5
Community Appearance Total	150.00	111.50

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Observations:

Eston's Main Street continues to be beautiful, well-maintained, clean and neat. Even if you are simply driving through town on the highway, looking down Main Street creates a great first impression. There was no litter or graffiti evident and garbage bins are well-placed. It is noteworthy that you have been able to keep the visual appeal of this street despite the number of vacant buildings. We actually didn't even notice they were vacant at first.

The Town of Eston has included strategic priorities for 2023 that will contribute to overall community appearance. We were glad to see that paving streets and sidewalk repair are two of the priorities. It is unfortunate that you have faced so many challenges to hire contractors to complete this work and hope you will continue to prioritize these projects yearly.

The signs on the Highway to major sites in the community are excellent. Gateway signs are well-maintained, except for the sign on the north highway.

Kudos on your purchase of a truckload of mulch. This will definitely help with weed control, conserve water in flower beds and around trees and improve community appearance.

The Reaburn Field renovations and painting of the main grandstand and bleachers were significant improvements. The grandstand in particular looks much better.

During our tour we noticed that the Town and volunteers were working on a new ball diamond. As pointed out, many of these volunteers are parents who have children playing ball. This was an excellent example of a new group of people volunteering to help improve the community.

The banners with bees and flowers on Main Street are in good condition. While it was mentioned they have faded a bit they are still very vibrant and enhance the street.

Recommendations:

We encourage you to continue with your plans for back-alley improvements and clean-up. With the overhanging trees, high grass and dead branches some of the alleys are difficult to navigate.

As noted in the 2022 CiB report, we suggest you add more recycle containers throughout the community.

Areas where weed control has been implemented are very evident. We appreciate you recognize the importance of weed control with your development of a policy in 2022. Further work is still required with weed control in parks, on streets and sidewalks.

While you have some lovely, well-maintained yards, we observed a higher number of residential properties that need more TLC. Many had overgrown grass and weeds, dead trees/branches and some appear neglected. We recognize the drought conditions you have faced and the difficulty retaining bylaw enforcement services which adds to this problem. We encourage you to continue to use your Town website, facebook page, Gopher Bites and

other methods of communication to encourage better yard maintenance. The 5 for 5 messaging was great and should be continued. Bylaw enforcement will be beneficial in more extreme cases.

Reinstate the Best Yard, Best Floral, Senior Gardener etc. competitions to profile the importance of yard/garden maintenance and to recognize the work of those who are maintaining their properties.

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: environmental stewardship, 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 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. This includes activities such as: the creation of Active Transportation networks, fleet management, and recognition of the importance of biodiversity to mitigate and adapt to climate change.	20	15
<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, plastics reduction programs, mulching of wood debris (Christmas trees, hedge trimmings, etc.) and reclamation of cut trees. Handling of hazardous waste including e-waste collection and reuse of compost material. Officially mandating the greening of public events such as on-site recycling bins, biodegradable drink containers, food service dishes, utensils, etc to minimize the use of plastic.	20	16
<u>Water Conservation</u> Use-reduction programs such as promotions, efficient irrigation, use of non-potable water, water restriction policies	15	12
<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	11.5
<u>Environmental Initiatives, Innovations and Actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and expansion of sustainable mobility and active transportation networks such as bike lanes, multi-use commuter pathways, and recreational trails - Horticultural practices such as planned biodiversity, green roofs, green walls, green lanes, living fences, buffer zones; re-use of sites; engineered wetlands, bioswales, permeable surfaces and rain water management - Brownfield redevelopment, remediation, land reclamation - Air quality programs such as alternate energy sources, sustainable design of facilities, sustainable fleet management, reduction of greenhouse gas emission (carbon reduction), anti-idling by-laws. 	10	8
<u>Business & Institutions</u>		
<u>Participation in The Environmental Effort</u> Waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle), water conservation, energy conservation and audits (fleet management, electric conservation), brownfield management	10	7.5
<u>Corporate Environmental Initiatives and Action</u> Innovation/stewardship, initiatives, activities (for example: environmental clean-up activities, plastic reduction) carbon emissions, green roofs	10	7
<u>Residential</u>		
<u>Participation in Environmental Initiatives</u> 3-R (reduce, reuse and recycle), composting	10	8
<u>Water & Energy Conservation</u> Practices such as water use reduction, rainwater collection and rain gardens, alternate forms of energy, thermostat reduction	15	11
<u>Community Involvement</u>		
<u>Public Participation – Civil Action</u> Participation in public forums and policy development on environmental issues, such as climate change adaptation and mitigation	5	4
<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	7.5
<u>Community Support</u> Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions in public environmental activities and programs	10	8
Environmental Action Total	150.00	115.50

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Observations:

Completion of the Water Treatment Plant is a major accomplishment. This was a \$19M project. The facility is impressive and will ensure the community continues to have access to safe water.

The Landfill underwent major renovation and upgrades and now has the capacity to serve as a regional landfill. As the Councillor, Bob, explained the type of soil in this area prevents leaching. The concrete by the landfill is intended to be crushed and repurposed in the future. The oil recycling at the landfill was also pointed out to us.

While Eston has a sufficient supply of water, they do impose water usage restrictions. Waterless Wednesdays continue to send a message to businesses and residents that water is a valuable commodity. It is also the day the Town waters the parks so there isn't excessive draw on the town water supply that day.

Eston continues to maintain a Compost Drop-off site which is noteworthy. The site has been moved. We saw in the Gopher Bites newsletter that you do provide information to residents on what is accepted at the compost site and what isn't.

Speed control signs on the highway and by the school use solar power.

Streetlights have been replaced with LED bulbs.

The Annual Community Garage sale was held in June. It emphasizes the importance of repurposing and reusing items that may have ended up in the landfill.

Recommendations:

The drought conditions in the area reinforce the need for more stringent water conservation policies. Waterless Wednesday was a great start to water conservation, but we suggest you consider even more restrictive policies such as watering every second day.

The use of more rain barrels on municipal, business and residential properties is encouraged. Even in drought conditions it doesn't take much rain to fill a rain barrel. As has been pointed out before, rainwater is better for plants.

We suggest you use your social media sites and newsletter to promote environmental practices such as composting, mulching, rainwater collection, energy conservation.

Loraas continues to collect recycling in Eston on a regular basis. To complement this, the addition of more recycling bins on Main Street and within your parks and community facilities would be beneficial to divert more items from the Landfill.

In future CiB visits, please share with the judges whether any of your businesses have implemented environmental practices.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage conservation includes efforts to preserve and protect both 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 represents the "persona" of a community and 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, traditional cultural groups, and conservation groups is considered.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Natural Heritage Plans Management and preservation policies, plans, programs and initiatives, including eco systems, eco parks, trail networks, grasslands, naturalization, wetlands, urban agriculture/farming, wildlife and wildlife corridors, protection of sensitive habitats, species at risk and support for at risk pollinators.	20	15.5
Natural Heritage Promotion Management and promotion of natural heritage (through communications, information and support programs, economic development/tourism) including year-around activities and programs for education and use of natural heritage sites (including trail networks) for and by the public.	15	11
Cultural Heritage Plans Policies, by-laws, plans, and preservation initiatives for heritage buildings, cemeteries, artifacts, museums, monuments, heritage trees and gardens, including their integration with streetscapes and landscape	15	13
Cultural Heritage Activities Initiatives throughout the year including festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	15	13
Business and Institutions		
Natural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and integration of natural heritage, including eco parks, conservation areas, trails, heritage gardens, trees and landscapes.	10	6.5
Cultural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and artifacts including their integration with the built/hard streetscapes and green landscapes	10	8
Residential		
Cultural Heritage Initiatives Conservation/restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and artifacts on residential lands	10	7
Community Involvement		
Natural Heritage Public Participation Participation in community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual natural heritage programs and initiatives including developing policies and plans, site improvements (including trails, eco parks, reforestation and management, maintenance, conservation and education initiatives	20	14
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	10	6.5
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	15	12.5
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	8.5
Heritage Conservation Total	150.00	115.50

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Observations:

The Museum (Prairie West Historical Centre) has done an excellent job of preserving the cultural history of this community. It is very well maintained by a small but dedicated group of volunteers. The display of fashions through the years is a great idea and our tour guide added great stories and information to enhance the museum tour. The schoolhouse is exceptional and worth a visit. We appreciated seeing the names of all the teachers that are inscribed in the desk drawer.

The Museum committee hosts a Christmas in November fundraiser annually and there are weekly hotdog sales at the Museum through the summer. They also do a birthday calendar fundraiser. This is just one example of volunteer efforts in the community.

The RM of Snipe Lake website does provide an Eston Cemetery Directory. While the website isn't interactive it does provide people with an alphabetized list of names and the location of gravesites. This is useful information for family members trying to locate a grave of a family member or friend. There used to be a book at the cemetery listing graves and locations, but that book was missing.

The Legion is in the midst of an upgrade. Wheelchair accessible ramps are being built to improve access to the building.

Jamieson Park is a wetland area with native plants and grasses on its shoreline. The water is aerated and has been used for ice hockey in the winter months. There is a walking path around the wetland, benches by the walking trail and trees that will eventually provide more shade in the area.

Recommendations:

The Wildflower Garden behind the museum would benefit from some TLC. We recognize the challenge of gardening in drought conditions, but it needs some weeding, and the overgrown perennials need to be divided so the walking path is visible again. It is appreciated that there is milkweed in the garden to attract monarch butterflies although it is not a plant native to Saskatchewan.

It is very unfortunate to see that the Heritage Building on Main Street, formerly the dentist office, is now vacant. We encourage the Town to consult with the building owner to ensure this building is maintained and hopefully sold quickly.

We suggest you find the book of gravesites from the cemetery and return it to its rightful place. It would also be beneficial to put the list of gravesites that are on the RM of Snipe Lake website on the Town of Eston site.

TREE MANAGEMENT		
Woodlands, Canopy Management, Urban and Rural Forestry includes the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents with regards to written policies, by-laws, standards for tree management protection (selection, planting, and maintenance), long and short-term management plans, tree replacement policies, pollinator-friendly tree selection, tree inventory including heritage, memorial, and commemorative trees, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs.		
	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	12
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 and managed forests	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	7.5
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) / Plant HealthCare (PHC): plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	10	8
Public Information Programs Provision of information on good planting techniques, best practices and maintenance programs	15	12
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	6
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff and/or qualified experienced contractors) and/or in place training programs	5	3.5
Business and Institutions		
Tree inventory Contribution to expanding overall tree inventory and canopy, management of hedgerows and forests, with consideration of design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees, on properties owned by businesses and institutions.	15	10
Maintenance Quality Programs, best practices with demonstrated results: watering, pruning, IPM	10	6
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	11
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	6.5
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	14
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	7
Tree Management Total	175.00	125.00

TREE MANAGEMENT

Observations:

New plantings are doing well and will further thrive with the addition of wood chip mulch to modulate soil temperatures, keep weeds down and hold moisture. The town waters new plantings and the CIB group has access to the water truck, a cooperative venture.

A pruning workshop was conducted with a fair number of participants. Further information relevant to property owners can be found on the Usask gardening website.

<https://gardening.usask.ca/index.php>

An arborist company has been contracted to prune municipal trees and will be made available to property owners. This will be of great benefit to both the aesthetics and health of the trees on both public and private property enhancing the overall look of the town. We did notice dead trees in Town, including at the RCMP office and the former Bible College which we suggest be checked.

Recommendations:

Procurement of seedlings from Shand/Sk Power greenhouse would be an effective way to start a nursery of native species (sustainable) at low to no cost. The skpower.com website has information regarding best practices for planting and shelter belt establishment.

The town's suggested tree list could be updated to include more deeply rooted and less-vulnerable-to-disease selections. Conifers would provide needed shelter both for people and wildlife. Consider year-round interest in selections of trees and shrubs.

Watering should be done at the drip line rather than at the trunk. Woodchips to a depth of 4" is recommended and should be kept a few inches away from the trunk as to deter rodents from girdling the trees in the winter.

The orchard would benefit from water and mulching. This was such an important initiative and we hope you revive the orchard.

A shelter belt suggestion for outside the landfill fence could include villosa lilacs, a long-lived non-suckering variety.

Involving the community in town-led initiatives to plant more trees is encouraged given the changing climate with winds and unusually low precipitation.

LANDSCAPE		
Landscape includes planning, design, construction and maintenance of parks, green spaces and cemeteries suitable for the intended use and location on a year-round basis. Elements for evaluation include native and introduced materials; biodiversity, 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 and provide safe and secure public spaces. 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		
Sustainable Designs – Soft Landscape Sustainable designs: energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, suitable plant varieties (including pollinator friendly), traffic calming, bank stabilization	15	12
Sustainable Designs - Hard Landscape Urban and civic design standards for streetscape and public places including considerations for public safety: flags, banners, public art, fountains, site furnishings, signage including wayfaring and directional, seasonal design and décor, walkways and paving materials including use of artificial turf and its protocols	15	12.5
Landscape Plan Integrated and implemented throughout the municipality	10	8
Landscape Management Programs Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Plant Health Care (PHC), alternative solutions to diseases and infestations when appropriate, Invasive Species Management, increased naturalization and adapted maintenance programs	10	7.5
Landscape Maintenance Policies, standards, best practices and programs including irrigation water management	10	7.5
Landscape Quality Landscape maintained to appropriate standards, specifications and best practices, as an example as shown in the Canadian Landscape Standards	5	4
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	8
Year-round use Demonstrated year-round opportunities and programs for education and people being active and using parks and green spaces (urban agriculture, community gardens, parks and recreation programs and accessible public washrooms)	10	8.5
Business and Institutions		
Sustainable Designs Energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, alternate groundcovers, urban agriculture	10	7
Integrated Plan Contribution to urban and civic design and public green spaces above requirements: such as public art, streetscape, site furniture, fountains and innovation in concept and design	15	11
Maintenance Quality Adequate ongoing life cycle management (ongoing maintenance, ground and asset management, rehabilitation and replacement) of all landscape elements	10	8
Residential		
Streetscape Appeal Residential yards (year-round, seasonal, themed)	15	11
Maintenance Quality Lawn care, trees and shrub maintenance (with demonstrated results)	15	11.5
Plant Selection Selection of plant material (native, local, innovative, edible and pollinator friendly plants)	10	8
Community Involvement		
Public Participation Participation in community programs (including children/youth) such as: urban agriculture, community gardens, "yard of the week", volunteer park maintenance, holiday illumination and decoration (promotion, organization, etc.)	20	16
Volunteer Succession Plan and Recognition Succession Plan and 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	15
Landscape Total	200.00	155.50

LANDSCAPE

Observations:

It was lovely to see the well-maintained town mascot and hear how it dresses up for different occasions. Flags and banners are in good shape. The pocket gardens are well designed and maintained and are an attractive way to dress up the main streets.

Andrea's View is testament to the thoughtful way the CIB committee efforts enrich the community. The fairy garden, stone snake and ice cream rocks are a great way to engage community members of all ages. Kudos for those initiatives!

The parks are well maintained; benches, tables, playground equipment are painted. Broadleafs are allowed to grow with the grass creating a tapestry of color and textures rather than a monoculture of grass—even with nitrogen enriching black medic in places. It was encouraging to see that the precious resource of water is used for trees and less for lawns.

The innovation garden needs TLC but the idea is creative, as are the windows displaying art pieces. This is a great way individuals in the community can be encouraged to create and be recognized for their work.

There are lots of back yard gardens and even a tomato planter on the street. Graffiti and litter was not evident.

The Fairy Garden is very whimsical and we appreciated hearing about the upgrades to this space.

The new display of mini-Christmas trees around the gopher sounds very festive. We appreciated hearing the Town also purchased new Christmas lights and decorations.

We observed ball diamonds were being built with the help of volunteers

Recommendations:

Placing your park benches in the shade or developing multi-layered plantings where benches are located would encourage more outdoor living and better suit climatic conditions. Jamieson Park is one example where benches could be better shaded.

Perhaps a contest featuring locally grown vegetables would be a fun way to encourage children and adults to grow food.

More pollinator-friendly plantings of trees, shrubs and flowers is encouraged. The usask.ca website and npss.sk.ca is a great resource for learning about plants native to the area as well as identifying noxious weeds.

Growing the CIB actions and a succession plan for the committee is needed to keep up the excellent work of this group. Perhaps subgroups with specific interests would encourage more involvement.

PLANT AND FLORAL DISPLAYS		
This category evaluates the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents to design, plan, execute, and maintain plant and 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. It also pertains to flowerbeds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets, and window boxes.		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Floral Display Plan of Action Integration into overall landscape plan and distribution through community. Concept and design, including sustainable design	15	12.5
Diversity of Displays Flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	20	16
Diversity of Plants Annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora, pollinator friendly plants	10	8
Maintenance Quality Maintenance to appropriate specifications and standards, best practices: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	20	18
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	8
Business and Institutions		
Design Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on grounds	15	12.5
Overall Plan Contribution to, and integration with, overall community plant and floral program	10	8
Maintenance Quality of planting and maintenance: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc. with demonstrated results.	10	8
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	12
Community Involvement		
Public Participation in community projects, volunteer initiatives (including children/youth), outreach programs in plant and floral displays (including promotion, organization, etc.)	15	12
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community plant and floral displays activities	15	13
Plant and Floral Displays Total	175.00	143.00

PLANT AND FLORAL DISPLAYS

Observations:

Planters are self watering and well maintained. Plants are purchased from a local greenhouse which benefits the community and local economy. The pots are very showy and well maintained.

Eston has a diversity of floral displays including hanging baskets, flowerbeds and planters dispersed throughout the community. There is also a nice variety of annuals, perennials, grasses and shrubs in their gardens.

The addition of mulch to perennial garden beds around town is very beneficial for water retention and aesthetics.

Many businesses have planters and floral displays in front of their buildings. The CiB committee has obviously worked hard to encourage businesses to display flowers.

Many yards are well cared for, many need attention. Back yard gardening was observed in many yards.

Recommendations:

Choose pollinator friendly plants along with the butterfly attracting petunias. There are many native and ornamental choices. One source of information is:
<https://gardening.usask.ca/articles-and-lists/articles-how-to/attracting-pollinators-to-your-yard.php>

Consider ground dwelling pollinators (most of our bee species live underground) when establishing sites for additional plantings.

The Vista series "Bubblegum" petunia in your planters are very vibrant and an excellent flower choice. If you are considering a change of themes there are other Vista series petunias in other colours that you could consider. There are also Bordeaux petunias that would do well. But as we discussed during the tour these are options only if you wish to change your theme as your current display is beautiful.

We noted fewer floral displays in residential areas. Continue to encourage residents through your website and Facebook pages to plant flowers, including annuals, perennials, bulbs and grasses to enhance their properties.



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.”

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