



Fitness Pathway

Target Risk Factor:

Safe active travel

Target Population:

All age groups

Project Leads:

Marilyn Neufeld, Chair, Kleefeld Recreation Association

Community:

Kleefeld

RHA:

South Eastman

Project Partners:

Landowners adjacent to pathway
Kleefeld EMC Youth Group
Kleefeld School
RM and Provincial Highways officials
Local businesses
Kleefeld Recreation Association

Project Details:

Multiple event or ongoing project

Description:

Development of a walking/cycling pathway between the town centre and a residential divisions north and south of town. Our goal was to provide safe active transportation for pedestrians and cyclists to and from school, seniors housing complex, residences, parks, recreation events, etc.

Time:

We started the process in earnest about 3 years ago. The various potential routes were explored (getting feedback from a number of landowners, MTS & Hydro connections and developers, RM and Provincial Highways people.) Once routes were established along the provincial right of way, I spent three months finalizing plans with Provincial Highways, collecting relevant information for our community networks, delivering letters to adjacent landowners to finalize agreements and support, applying for and receiving grants and concrete RM support, doing

homework on various surface types and costs. Then it was just a matter of booking suppliers and a landscaping contractor, and waiting for the weather to cooperate.

Objectives:

- To offer a safe alternative to walking or cycling on the shoulder of a busy provincial highway where traffic travels dangerously close to 100 km/h, also eliminating the ingestion of toxic fumes.
- Provide school children who walk or cycle to school with a safe travel option to town, bypassing a busy turning corner for bus and commuter traffic, morning and evening.
- Provide safe walking, cycling and wheelchair access for residents living in an outlying subdivision to get to and from school, parks, stores, church, recreational events, and other town centre destinations or events.
- Increase access to green traffic and active transportation to school and town activities, reducing the need to take a school bus or drive the 1 - 2 km distance.
- Promote community cooperation through the building and maintenance of the pathway.
- Promote safe, regular physical activity and enjoyment of the outdoors for people of all ages and with all physical abilities.
- Establish a vision for future priorities in a growing community (appreciation and preservation of green space and recreational opportunities).

Planning Supports:

Community discussions on the need for safer commuting routes for cyclists and pedestrians.

Results:

The pathways have been built to code for phase 1 and 2 of our overall project, and have been regularly used by up to about 30 people in a day so far. We have had very positive feedback from nearly everyone in the community. Two of the landowners adjacent to the pathway on the way out of town have voiced concerns about minor water drainage problems, and have suggested that garbage cans be installed on at least one end of that particular stretch. The garbage cans are on order. We are waiting and watching to see if water concerns are actually a product of the pathway project as opposed to broader drainage issues, and are staying in touch on those matters.

What worked:

The pathway is being enthusiastically used every day. Community members are still on board about their part in the cosmetic details, and the local Recreation Association Green team member is keeping the pathway in shape. Another community member has been keeping the grass along the sides mown. Our councillor has been very supportive all along, and continues to carry the vision on into the next phase plans.

What didn't work and any changes made:

Our initial hope for routes were more interesting (cross country, meandering through more interesting terrain), and we were disappointed at having to let go of that and settle for a straight path next to the highway. The final 50 feet of the path has had to remain temporary until the developer finishes a highway approach.

Unexpected Outcomes:

Once these initial phases of the pathway were accomplished, a neighbour on the opposite end of town caught the vision and volunteered his land, time and machinery to develop about a half kilometre pathway in that direction, if our Recreation Association would apply for a grant for

materials. This is still in process, and we are waiting on provincial highways to sign the final permission.

Other notes:

Because the pathway is a very visible and concrete project, and good for such a broad spectrum of the community, people have stepped forward to volunteer their help, with smaller projects, but also to join our committee to help further their own visions for the community. They are seeing that their personal involvement can make a substantial difference and they will actually be able to see tangible results.

Resources

Volunteers:

- Adjacent landowners and businesses: general policing, clean-up, tree plantings
- Kleefeld School: advertising, peer policing, clean-up and minor maintenance
- Kleefeld EMC Youth Group: peer policing, clean-up and minor maintenance
- Local businesses: planning, building and landscaping, free estimates, advice, discounts on materials and labour. These businesses also donated time and materials for minor maintenance and repairs, as well as future landscaping ideas.

Materials developed for your program

- [Picture 1](#)
- [Picture 2](#)

Contact Information:

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