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REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Keeping Saskatchewan's Brightest Light Shining



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Message from the Mayor & Council

On behalf of the Resort Village of Candle Lake and Council, I am pleased to present our first Annual Report to the Community. This new public report is one more way we are enhancing communication to our residents and visitors to the community. We hope you enjoy reading about some of the things we have been working on this past year to keep the Resort Village, Saskatchewan's Brightest Light, shining!

It seems like just yesterday that we took on the role of providing direction on the management and operation of the Resort Village. I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say this has been challenging work. However, we have remained committed to our goals of strengthening our governance to ensure the most effective and efficient use of our finances and human resources, to develop and implement strategies to ensure the long-term environmental and economic sustainability of our community, and to provide a high quality of life for those that live or vacation here.

As you know, our community is growing. Since 2016, our population of permanent residents has grown by almost 15% - that's a significant increase for a community of our size. In the summer, close to 10,000 people are utilizing many of our services. These fluctuations in population are challenging as our operations and staff must adapt to changing demand. At the same time, our infrastructure, things like our lagoon, landfill, and recreation facilities, must also accommodate fluctuating growth.

Another challenge is rising inflation. Over the past few years Canada's inflation has risen dramatically. According to the Bank of Canada, a \$100 basket of goods and services (food, shelter, furniture, clothing, transportation, and recreation) in 2019 now costs \$128.59. Like all municipalities in Canada, as costs to run our community increase, we have been faced with making difficult decisions such as aligning our taxation strategies to address high inflation and recover from past taxation policies that were unsustainable for our growing community's needs.

In 2022 we created a strategic plan and many of the things we did in 2023 were a result of having this in place. The plan called for more innovation in funding projects and initiatives. In the past few years, we have acquired over \$1.7 million in grant funding for major projects. We are hopeful an announcement regarding funding for our Lagoon project (almost \$5.5 million) will be made soon. The plan also included goals to improve our roadway maintenance and address long-term drainage and wastewater issues. We have made substantial progress in these areas, but we know there is more to be done.

The safety of our residents is also a top priority. Our 10 Year Emergency Services Master Plan is now being implemented by our experienced part time Fire Chief. This work has already resulted in upgrades to our Dwelling Protection Grade, which could decrease insurance costs for many residents. Our Community Safety Officer Program is also strong.

We know that many of us choose to live, vacation, or visit here because of the natural beauty and clean environment we experience. These qualities lend well to an active and healthy lifestyle. We have been working closely with our Sport, Culture and Recreation Board to ensure our community remains culturally vibrant and full of fun and exciting sport programs, leisure activities and community events. We've been working with our Trails Advisory Board to develop standards for trail development and maintenance and to ensure consideration of responsible use and protection of the natural environment as our trails are developed, used, and maintained. We also began updating our Terms for Reference for all of our Boards and Committees so they can focus on their original intent and operate using the same processes and procedures.

We are also putting in place more robust communication processes that will help ensure residents have access to information and can become more engaged in the overall work of the Resort Village. With a small communications budget, we created a new website and newsletter, and in 2023, we worked to strengthen our social media presence.

Near the end of the year, the Resort Village reached an agreement with CUPE, the union that supports our in-scope employees. The agreement was a 4-year renewal of the existing contract last negotiated in 2019. It retained the annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) but replaced any increase over and above COLA with an incentive plan whereby performance contributing towards operational efficiencies and productivity enhancement can be rewarded.

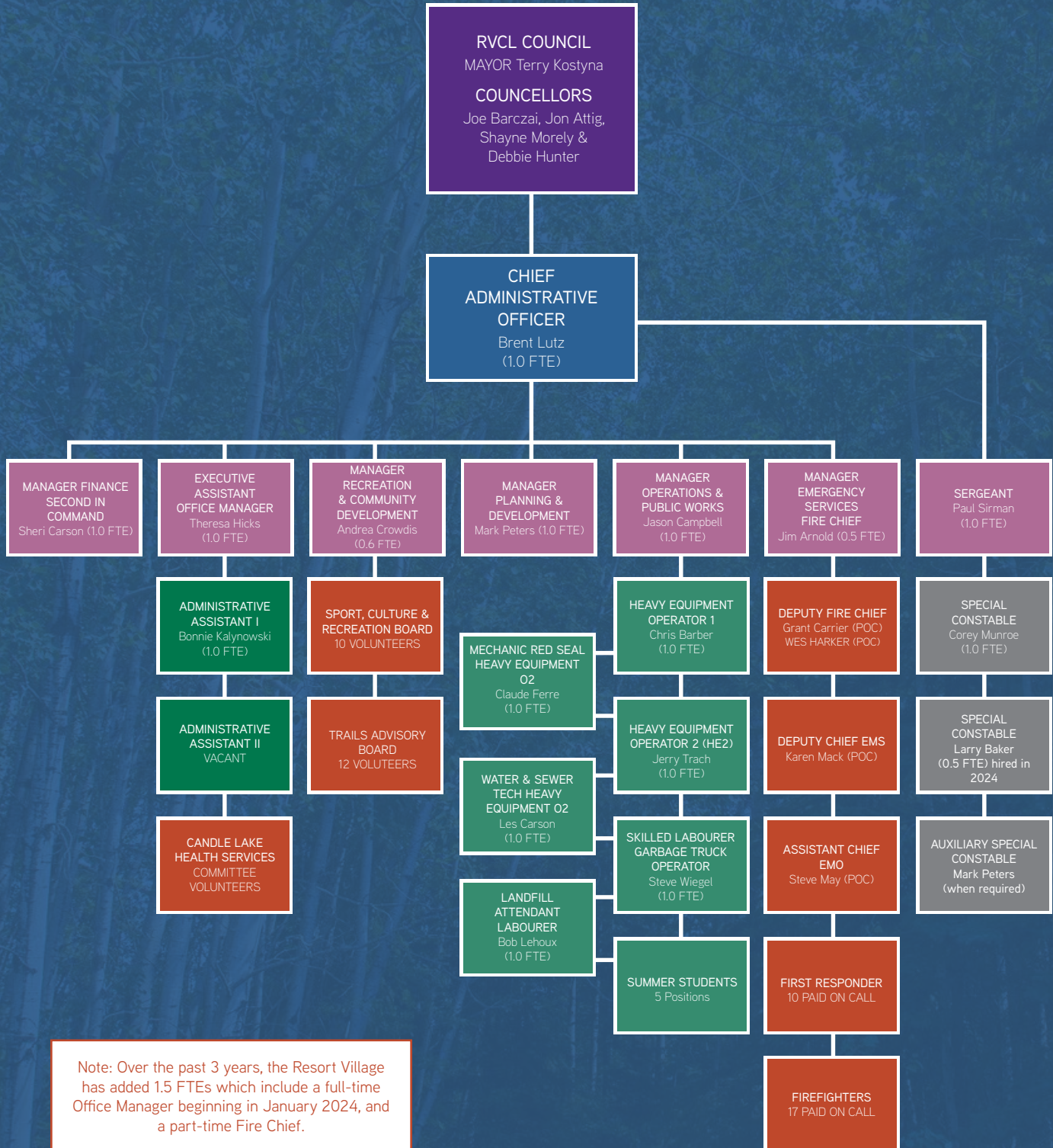
Finally, we are working with our neighbouring municipalities and communities to update the District Official Community Plan that will guide future development in the district. Other planning is also underway in the areas of housing and health so we can ensure residents have the services and amenities they need to remain in our community well into their senior years.

In closing, I want to thank my colleagues on Council for having the vision and courage to make important needed changes that will help ensure we are well positioned to deal with future challenges. Our staff, from our managers to part-time summer students, deserve a round of applause for their hard work and dedication to our community. We also thank our property owners for their patience as we continue our work to ensure the Resort Village remains a viable and fantastic place to live and visit.

Sincerely, Terry Kostyna, Mayor, Resort Village of Candle Lake



Organizational Chart



Note: Over the past 3 years, the Resort Village has added 1.5 FTEs which include a full-time Office Manager beginning in January 2024, and a part-time Fire Chief.

FTE = 1 full-time staff person

Enhancing Operations & Governance

Strategic Plan Element: Provide the best service possible by ensuring we have the staff we need to properly manage the Resort Village, implement stronger internal processes and procedures, and train staff where required.

With the help of external contractors with expertise in municipal governance, over the past few years we have put in place new processes, policies and procedures that meet the requirements of *The Municipalities Act*. We have created an organizational structure that is aligned with other high performing municipalities. We have improved our Administration functions by ensuring we have people with the skills and experience required to effectively manage the Resort Village and meet the needs of our residents. This has resulted in an increase of one full-time, and one part-time staff member since 2020.

We have also implemented more robust planning tools and processes. Managers are now better skilled in identifying issues that need to be addressed, creating project plans, determining costs, and identifying potential funding opportunities to reduce the burden on taxpayers. In the past three years, the Resort Village has been successful in acquiring government grants valued at over \$1.7 million.

In 2023 the Resort Village...

- Reduced the need to hire outside contractors by providing staff with training in the following areas:
 - Canadian Playground Safety Institute Certificate to inspect playgrounds and play structures;
 - Motor Grader Operator Certificate;
 - 3A License to operate a gravel truck;
 - Level 1 Water Treatment and Distribution and Wastewater Treatment and Collection Certification; and
 - Other training including: WHMIS, CPR, First Aid, Defensive Driving, Elevated Platforms, Chainsaw Safety, Fall Protection and Basic Heavy Equipment Operator Training.
- Created an Office Manager position to provide support to our Chief Administrative Officer, freeing up time for this position to focus on overall management.
- Strengthened governance by creating a Committee of the Whole (CotW) providing Council with additional time to study and review issues in more detail in a public setting before being brought forward to public Council Meetings for decision.
- Improved the annual budgeting process by implementing detailed steps and timelines in creating, reviewing, and approving the budget. A preliminary budget which includes priority projects identified by Council is now created, shared with the public, and reviewed in a series of meetings. The final budget is prepared and presented to Council in March each year.
- Made progress on updating the Bylaws and the Terms of Reference by which Resort Village Boards and Committees operate which will create efficiencies in all operations.

New Technologies to Create Efficiencies

Strategic Plan Element: Advance our use of technology so Resort Village staff can work more efficiently, work remotely if required, and improve communication to residents.

Like most public organizations, the Resort Village is moving from paper to digital operations and reviewing new administrative management software to manage records and projects. Over the past few years, communication has also been enhanced with the creation of a new website with a Service Tracker feature to help residents report issues, a monthly newsletter, and a Facebook page.

In 2023 the Resort Village...

- Implemented new software called Site Docs to modernize the way we manage equipment, facilities, and maintenance schedules. The Resort Village is also working on a project management system and software to better track and understand project expenses, enhance reporting and planning, and manage our assets.
- Began updating our Internal and External Communication Policies to help Council, management and staff communicate among themselves and with residents more effectively.
- Purchased a new audio and video system which has improved our virtual meeting capabilities.
- Began investigating a new software that will allow the public to apply for permits online and to manage our permitting application database.
- Increased our use of Facebook to provide residents with more information in a timely manner. We continue to review our communication tools and resources available for this important function on an ongoing basis.

Upgrading Municipal Utilities to Meet Growing Needs

Strategic Plan Element: Ensure the proper operation of our wastewater system and pursue a long-term solution to address capacity issues at the East Lagoon.

In 2020, upon discovering the Resort Village had received several warnings from the province regarding operational issues at the East Lagoon, several corrective actions were taken to ensure both lagoons were being properly maintained to meet regulatory requirements. Procedures were also put in place to collect proper data from sewage haulers. The Resort Village also worked with the Golf Resort to install a sewage flow meter at the golf course. Around this time, it was also discovered the East Lagoon was reaching its capacity. In 2022, with technical expertise provided by Associated Engineering, the Resort Village applied for a \$5.5 million grant to expand the East Lagoon. Funding has been approved and will be announced by the funding agency in due course. The total cost of this project is \$6,600,000. The Resort Village contribution will be \$1,750,000 and will meet the growing needs of our community for the next 25 years.

In 2023, the Resort Village...

- Continued to enhance the training of our Water and Wastewater Technician to ensure the community grounds potable water system and lagoons are operating properly and meet regulatory requirements on an ongoing basis.
- Implemented a monthly reporting system whereby the Golf Resort reports back to the Resort Village on its sewage volume.
- Installed underground infrastructure from the Resort Village Office to the public washrooms for a potable water source that will serve a future water fountain and water bottle filling station. A potable water distribution system is also being investigated to accommodate future developments including the 55+ Housing Project across from the Community Hall.

Strategic Plan Element: Implement a more equitable system to operate the Landfill; modernize Landfill operations and prepare for the decommissioning of the historic landfill cell.

In 2023, the Resort Village...

- Created a business plan and new fee structure that covers the costs of operating the landfill and waste collection services. The payment system at the Landfill was modernized through a new system that allows for debit and credit card payments.
- Installed infrastructure for future video cameras that would be used to monitor disposals at the Landfill, along with new and improved signage.
- Applied for and received ICIP funding in the amount of \$446,873 to decommission the old cell at our landfill. Consultation with surrounding communities was completed, the ICIP funding agreement was finalized, and preliminary design work was completed. A tender for this project will be issued soon with the expectation the work will be complete by fall 2024.

Grant Funding Received:

- Landfill decommissioning - \$445,873 (ICIP)

Improving & Maintaining Infrastructure

Strategic Plan Element: Make needed repairs to roadway infrastructure and develop an annual road repair program; improve drainage within problem areas in the community.

The topography in the area means drainage has always been an issue in various areas of our community. We have made improvements to our roadways and are enhancing our planning and equipment so we can find long-term solutions to these challenges.

In 2023, the Resort Village....

- Created plans to maintain and improve roadways for the long-term including at Simon Lehne Drive, Fairway Drive, and Lakeview Drive and complete other annual road repairs throughout the Resort Village. An ongoing annual budget was developed to address drainage issues in other neighbourhoods.
- Completed the Airpark and Lakeside Flood Mitigation Berm/Active Corridor Project. In addition to improving drainage and adding protection from indirect flooding from Torch Lake, this project provided an opportunity to extend the existing westside trail network further north to reduce pedestrian use of Hwy 265 and Lakeview Drive, helping to enhance physical activity and safety at the same time. The total cost of this project was almost \$318,000 with well over half of the funds, \$186,000, provided through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- Purchased equipment to improve operations including:
 - A road grader box blade (attachment for the skid steer) to help construct and maintain trails and enable us to conduct grading work in small areas. This has decreased our need to contract out small jobs resulting in cost savings.
 - A new grader to replace the 12 year-old grader.
- Developed a new Snow Removal Policy which outlines the priority order in which roadways will be cleared, and the details of how this work will be done. This was approved by Council in early 2024.
- Began planning for infrastructure for crosswalks/delineators in high pedestrian traffic areas.

Grant Funding Received:

- Airpark and Lakeside Flood Mitigation Berm/Active Corridor Project - \$186,222 (ICIP)
- Crosswalks and Delineator - \$15,000 (Canadian Community Building Fund)

Strengthening Planning & Development Activities

Strategic Plan Element: Modernize existing bylaws and policies and develop a new Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw to address current needs and help the Resort Village in future planning.

In 2022, the Resort Village and other neighbouring communities in the North Central Lakelands Planning District received funding to develop a new District Official Community Plan (DOCP). The DOCP enables communities, property owners, businesses, and developers to make informed decisions and contribute positively to vibrancy, safety, self-reliance, and sustainability. Having a district plan is important as the Resort Village effectively shares Torch Lake with the RM of Paddockwood which includes Aspen Ridge and Cranberry Creek and other potential future developments.

In 2023 work to collect background information and analysis of societal trends likely to affect the region over the next 25 years continued; the plan will be complete early this year.

As part of the DOCP, the Resort Village will have its own Official Community Plan (OCP) which will be used to ensure development is conducted in a responsible fashion and to guide short and long-term planning and land use management.

In 2023, the Resort Village....

- Invited the public to provide input into the DOCP at various events.
- Created a 'Sale of Municipal Land Policy' to help the Resort Village consider proposals from property owners to, for example, correct lot boundary issues. The policy includes a fixed set of criteria and process that will help Council evaluate proposals and make decisions.
- Began working with Associated Engineering to put in place proper development standards including rules for building and servicing new areas.
- Strengthened planning for future capital requirements with the development of a five-year capital plan (for 2024). Work is also underway to develop a 20-Year Asset Management Plan to help ensure the Resort Village is prepared for longer-term capital and infrastructure needs.

Creating and Enhancing Opportunities for Recreation

Strategic Plan Element: Ensure the preservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of our community through the proper development and maintenance of recreation infrastructure. Proceed with projects including the rehabilitation of the Community Hall, extension of the West Trail and other items included in the 20 Year Green Space Master Plan created by Council in 2022.

In 2022, the Resort Village created the 20 Year Master Plan for Parks, Open Spaces and Trails to guide decision-making and policy-setting regarding existing and future recreation infrastructure.

In 2023, the Resort Village....

- Formally adopted the Master Plan, after an extensive planning process that included an in-depth review of existing plans, policies, infrastructure and amenities, and community surveying and engagement with residents, visitors, volunteer groups and community services stakeholders.
- Began investigating innovative ways to help people get around our Resort Village in more economical and environmentally friendly ways. As a result of our efforts a provincial pilot project was initiated which allows municipalities to enact bylaws that permit people to drive golf carts on municipal roads under specific circumstances. Bike racks were also installed throughout the community.
- Created a Community Development Matching Fund to inspire residents, property owners and group members to champion projects in our community to improve, build and strengthen Candle Lake and enhance the quality of life for everyone. The Fund provides funding for up to 25% of expenses to a maximum of \$10,000 for projects that enhance infrastructure amenities within parks, greenspaces, open spaces, and trails on public municipal lands. In 2023, two projects were funded - a gazebo in Harbour Golf Estates, and improvements at the Curling Rink.
- Expanded playground programming and increased recreation equipment availability with new storage.
- Added new infrastructure to dispose of dog waste and installed additional bear proof garbage cans.
- Re-worked the Bylaw and Terms of Reference of the Sport, Culture and Recreation Board to more accurately reflect the goals of the RVCL organization and the work of the Board.
- In collaboration with volunteers from the Sport, Culture and Recreation Board, provided the community with the following events, programs, and activities:
 - Drama production "The Savannah Sipping Society"
 - Music Bingo
 - Ongoing Monthly Bingos
 - Drive-in Movie
 - Basketball Camp
 - Scuba & Snorkel Lessons
 - Swimming Lessons

- Canada Day Celebrations
 - Mystical Forest
 - Trunk or Treat
 - Community Christmas Supper
- Was successful in acquiring an ICIP grant of \$921,491 to make improvements to the Community Hall. Consultation with user groups, and engineering and design plans were completed, and the renovations will be complete in 2024.
 - In collaboration with volunteers from the Trails Advisory Board, completed the following trail projects:
 - Bereskin Drive Trail Extension
 - Trail from Bereskin Drive to Henderson Place
 - Upgrades to the trail from Main Street to the West Service Road
 - Simon Lehne Trail was extended towards Noble Point
 - Began construction on the new Fun Run Trail. This was made possible through grants in the amounts of \$16,000 from the Candle Lake Fun Run Inc. and \$40,000 from the SGI Provincial Traffic Safety Fund. The Trail will provide a safe pedestrian and cyclist connection from Bayview commercial area to the Recreation grounds, including access to Bay Lake Trails.
 - Created a Charitable Tax Receipt Policy where residents can designate donations to community groups and receive a tax receipt from the Resort Village for gifts of \$100 and greater.
 - The Resort Village initiated discussions with the provincial government regarding amenities located at Nobles Point, a government-run facility. The Village continues to work with the government agencies involved and is hopeful the matter will be resolved soon.

Grant Funding Received

- 20 Year Parks, Open Spaces and Trails Masterplan - \$25,000
- Highway 265 Trail extension to Main Street - \$35,000 (Canadian Community Building Fund)
- Community Hall Renovation – \$921,491 (ICIP)



Enhancing Emergency Services

Strategic Plan Element: Enhance existing services and develop a multi-year plan to ensure these services expand as our community grows.

In late 2021, our emergency services (Firefighters, Medical First Responders, and the Emergency Measures Organization) were realigned to create efficiencies in how services are provided in our community. In October 2022, the provincial government passed legislation requiring all fire departments to formally declare the level of service they can provide to a community. In response, the Resort Village developed a 10 Year Emergency Services Master Plan based on best practices in emergency services and legislation. The Plan identified 63 recommendations to enhance internal and external services over the next 10 years.

In 2023, the Resort Village....

- Hired a part-time Fire Chief to implement the plan. Some of the items completed in 2023 included;
 - Bylaws and policies relating to Emergency Services were updated.
 - Grant funding was obtained to complete vehicle extrication training and purchase equipment including cutters and air bags that aid in extrication.
 - Planning for Incident Command System training for managers was initiated. Emergency Operations Center training will follow.
 - Staff training in wild land firefighting began. The Resort Village is also engaging with the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency to enhance our firefighter training. Several firefighters also began work to complete their Firefighter Level 1 training. Members also completed Fireworks Display Assistance Training and Fireworks Display Supervisor Training.
 - Thanks to the efforts of our Fire Department, the Resort Village Dwelling Protection Grade was upgraded. Insurers use this information to help establish fire insurance premiums, offering lower premiums in communities with better protection.
 - A vehicle for the Fire Chief, acquired from the existing Resort Village vehicle pool, was equipped with an Ultra High-Pressure system to help respond to small fires more quickly.
 - Upgrades were made to lights and sirens on the fire engine and the tanker.
 - Discussions regarding a future satellite fire station to improve response times on the north end of Hwy 265 and throughout the Resort Village began.

Grant Funding Received

- 10 Year Emergency Services Masterplan - \$12,500 from ICIP (2022)
- Emergency Extrication Equipment - \$70,000 (SGI)

Supporting Commercial Development

Strategic Plan Element: Provide better support to help existing local businesses succeed and identify new opportunities for potential business owners and investors.

In 2023 the Resort Village...

- Assisted the Chamber of Commerce in acquiring permits to install a new business directory sign on Highway 265; this work will be completed in 2024.
- Began research into options for digital signage at the Community Grounds along Highway 265 to promote community events and share important messages.
- Applied for a grant to develop a new commercial area, called Market Square, which would accommodate space for entrepreneurs to open a new business in Candle Lake. While the Resort Village was not successful in the granting process, planning and preparation for a future grant opportunity continues.
- Began investigating opportunities to address seasonal staff housing.

Planning to Meet the Future Needs of Residents

Strategic Plan Element: Develop housing options and health services that will allow residents to remain in the Resort Village as they age.

In 2022, a Housing Demands Needs Assessment found there is a high demand for affordable housing in the Resort Village, particularly among older residents. For these residents, the availability of health care services will also determine if they remain in the community.

In 2023, the Resort Village....

- Developed a 55+ Housing Strategy and issued an Expression of Interest to identify builder/developer(s) interested in building for resale, owner occupied or rental housing on Resort-owned land. Several good responses were received and qualified builders/developer are now being asked to submit a detailed proposal.
- Worked with our Health Services Committee and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to recruit a permanent part-time physician to our Health Centre. The SHA hired a Medical Laboratory Assistance, and with this, ECG services were enhanced. The Centre continues to use the services of Nurse Practitioners as they are available. In 2024, the Health Services Committee will be reaching out to the community to complete a community health needs assessment to assist them in setting new goals and objectives that will enhance our health services even more. They will also be looking for volunteers to assist with basic health and wellness needs.



2023 Budget: Your Tax Dollars at Work

The Resort Village fiscal year runs January 1 to December 31. Each spring, Administration prepares an operating and capital budget for approval by Village Council.

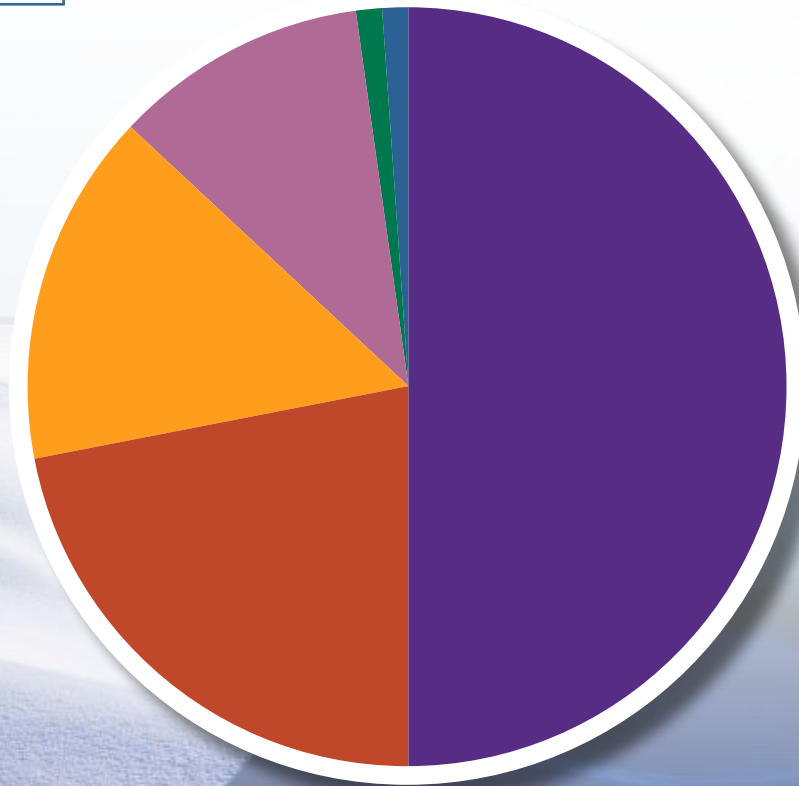
How the Resort Village Was Funded in 2023

The 2023 Budget Revenues totalled \$ 5,627,775.

A breakdown of revenue sources was as follows:

■ Taxes \$ 2,872,312 (50%)	■ Transfers from Reserves \$ 599,760 (11%)
■ Grants \$1,251,795 (22%)	■ Capital Asset Proceeds \$85,000 (1%)
■ Fees and Services \$ 929,075 (15%)	■ Other \$ 96,190 (1%)

Total \$ 5,834,132



How Revenue Was Allocated in 2023

In 2023 Budget, expenditures were the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ General Government \$994,210 (16%) | ■ Public Health & Welfare Services \$28,224 (0%) |
| ■ Protective Services (CSO's, Fire and Emergency Services) \$763,328 (13%) | ■ Planning & Development Services \$363,453 (6%) |
| ■ Transportation Services (Streets and Roads) \$1,436,620 (23%) | ■ Recreation & Community Development \$1,027,398 (17%) |
| ■ Environmental Health Services (Waste Collection and Landfill) \$850,222 (14%) | ■ Utilities (Water and Wastewater) \$76,858 (1%) |
| | ■ Fiscal Services (Loan Repayments and Transfers from Reserves) \$682,796 (10%) |

Total \$ 5,834,132







RESORT VILLAGE OF
CANDLE
Lake

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