

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
5TH COUNCIL, 30TH SESSION**

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NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 6

The attached brief regarding Territorial Financial Assistance -
Municipal Community Centres is submitted by the Fort Smith Community
Society.

FORT SMITH COMMUNITY SOCIETY

Mr. S.A. Dodds,
Chairman,
Fort Smith Village Council,
Fort Smith, N.W.T.

May 26, 1965.

Dear Mr. Dodds:

Territorial Financial Assistance - Municipal Community Centres

Recently the costs of providing adequate social and physical community recreational facilities on a scale sufficient for the minimum year-round needs of our larger incorporated communities has for a number of reasons grown beyond the grant system founded to assist in their construction. This has created a barrier to the completion of integrated multi-purpose facilities on a joint, or at least, an accelerated basis.

The program in its present concept calls for re-eligibility for grants up to the \$50,000 maximum at the end of any given period of 5 years.

The result has been a bottleneck in the completion of comprehensive facilities have a broad appeal to the entire family in the community. While it is possible, for example, to build a skating arena for just under the maximum eligible costs of \$100,000, or a Community Centre-Care containing club rooms, meeting rooms and social facilities or, to complete a suitable three to five sheet curling rink, it is impossible under the present grant system to complete all of these facilities at the same time and still operate under full benefit of the program. Incorporated communities have the necessary population and adequate potential with respect to financing a fair proportion of costs at reasonable debenture rates not available to other communities, and it is for this reason that this brief is submitted with respect to communities who are now; or who subsequently become incorporated.

For a number of reasons it is therefore suggested that: (a) the present restriction of a 5 year waiting period now in force before further grants can be applied for be revoked. Also (b) that the grant maximum, or ceiling, as presently constituted, be replaced by a figure based on an equivalent number of renewable periods of eligibility equal to the allowable length of term of the debenture portion of the cost - provided of course that the estimated life of the centre equals or exceeds the term of the debenture. The present maximum debenture period allowable is 15 years, however, it may be changed. A 15 year debenture period equals 3 x 5 years; or 3 periods. Thus grants of \$150,000 would be proposed on projects proposed. In recognition of the vital position of the ratepayers of the community, it is further suggested that (c) the portion of costs to be raised from local contribution permit a direct contribution out of the revenues of the municipality for the local cash portion in excess of the present program maximum requirement of \$18,750 for any amount of total cost in excess of the present program maximum. This is further illustrated in the following table:

Total Outlay	Territorial Grant	Local Share	
		non-Debenture	Debenture
\$100,000	\$ 50,000	\$18,750 pledges	\$31,250
200,000	100,000	18,750 pledges	62,500
		18,750 Mun. funds	
300,000	150,000	18,750 pledges	93,756
		37,500 Mun. funds	

While the present program does not specify the source of local contributions and re-definition is not sought; approval in principle to the above method of financing is suggested to assure both a realistic local campaign and practical assurances that the integrated facilities proposed can in fact be programmed for completion within a reasonable and economical period of time. It is hoped thereby to avoid a crippling pledge campaign, or one whose total requisitor would make impossible the proposed concentration of programs which we have set out here.

The rapid rate of growth of our northern communities, the necessity to overcome isolation boredom and the awkward barriers against proper and desirable social integration of all the peoples of the north, the need to attract a more responsible type and a more permanent stable semi-skilled and professional element--all these reasons in the emerging strong free north make facilities for the social and recreation needs of the families of all the people essential for positive development of our organized communities. This will allow community development to occur in a way which allow our local and our native people especially to participate more fully, decently, and equally. To do this competently requires community planning in the sense of building the services of each community phase by phase beginning with the simple urgent requirements. These include shelter, utilities, community services, employment and, not least, good wholesome recreation. We are concerned with recreation as a key to better, more stable community life.

Living as we do in a territory which "boasts" one of the highest venereal diseases rates in Canada, as well as an alcoholic consumption that is astronomical as well as "High", and with the highest death rate from the exhaustion diseases of the unfit--including pneumonia--we have cause to view with serious concern the lack of suitable and enjoyable as well as adequate social and sports recreation facilities to make our communities healthy, physically fit, morally and socially well adjusted. We know of no other way by which this end could be better achieved than as proposed.

It is therefore submitted to the Members of the Territorial Council that present legislation be amended to permit maximum development of long-term multi-purpose local recreation facilities to take place as outlined above over a reasonably short period of time.

To ensure maximum use and minimum net operating costs to the communities, it is further recommended that (d) communities which agree to erect a multi-purpose recreation centre be made eligible for receipt of physical fitness directorate grants for 50% of the cost of hiring adequate, qualified recreation managers. There would be no objection if it were made a requirement of the capital construction grant that an approved recreation Manager be employed to ensure maximum return for the investment of the people of Canada and of the Territorial Council in the future and well being of its people.

Finally, it is recommended that to implement the program, (e) funds be approved in principle for projects now proposed or which could be completed as under the enlarged terms of the program at Hay River and Fort Smith, respectively. For construction as soon as acceptable plans and financing proposals are obtained; together with the approval of local ratepayers.

Yours sincerely,

P. Ferguson,
President,
Fort Smith Community Society.