

How does one raise \$1,750,000 and when should a campaign start? Both are good questions, ones that have been raised many times over the course of the Multiplex Project. The Russell Regional Multiplex Campaign Committee would like to take an opportunity to address both of them as follows:

1. When should you start a fundraising campaign?

It has been suggested by some that the Multiplex Committee made a mistake by not having all the money that was needed to be raised locally in place before construction of the facility was ever started. While this sounds like a good idea there were circumstances that impacted the decision of the Committee both on the timing of the construction and on the date when the project was presented to the community for sponsorship and support.



In June 2009, the Town of Russell received a letter from the Building Canada Fund (BCF) indicating that it had received approval for a \$2 million Federal Government contribution and a \$2 million Provincial Government contribution to the Russell Regional Multiplex. From that date until March of 2010 the Committee worked under the assumption that monies provided under the BCF Grant were to be expended and the project completed by March 31st, 2011. In order to meet that date drawings, plans, tenders and contracts were all completed and committed to in order to ensure construction would meet the March 31st, 2011 deadline. It was only after commitments were made that would have been difficult and expensive to change that the Committee learned that it had more time to complete the project.

Fundraising for the project started in the fall of 2009 with a public meeting, private donation opportunities and special events. The Committee started the fundraising campaign as soon as details of the project were sufficiently formulated to ensure that the community knew what they were supporting.

So, starting a campaign can be a tricky thing, a balancing act between rushing out and attempting to raise money or delaying the campaign in order to be able to tell and inform people about what they are supporting and contributing to. The first strategy faces the risk of not raising enough money from people who won't support a project they know little about, while the second runs the risk that insufficient time remains to raise the money needed to cover construction costs of a project the community is informed about. So it appears that picking a perfect time to start can be almost impossible.



2. How do you raise \$1.75 million?

At first the sheer size of the campaign appears overwhelming and on many a day the Committee has struggled with how to raise an average of \$500 to \$1,000 for every adult and child in our area. The Committee has looked to the success of other communities and has sought the support of provincial government departments in designing and implementing a campaign that can be successful in raising the necessary funds. As a result the Russell Regional Multiplex Capital Campaign Committee developed a plan that saw three specific streams of donations and sponsorships to the project.

- i. **Private donations** – are donations from private residents both current and past of our community and region. It is this part of the capital campaign that was involved with the door to door visits completed in the fall of 2010 and the telephone blitz earlier this winter. This portion of the campaign has been successful not only in accessing monies for the project but also in being able to answer individuals questions about the project, its status and its potential operation.

The goal for the personal campaign is \$400,000. To date \$68,000 has been raised.

- ii. **Special Events** – is charged with the responsibility of identifying and organizing events with other community groups or partners that will help to raise funds toward the Multiplex. It has included a couple of different events such as a “Homecoming Social” and the “Last Hurrah” at the old arena. Upcoming events include a book launch, variety concert, a community auction and sportsman’s dinner.

The goal of the Special Events campaign is to raise \$250,000. To date \$38,000 has been raised.

- iii. **Corporate/Business Donations** – is charged with raising funds from businesses and corporations that do business in our area or that depend on our area for their employee base or for the purchase their product. This is a key component of the fundraising campaign and has been charged with the responsibility to raise the greatest portion of the dollars required in the campaign. This component is also our opportunity to reach outside our immediate area and ask for sponsorship and partnerships with businesses on a project that will change the face of recreation in our entire region.

The Committee has been busy visiting both local and non local businesses providing information and partnership opportunities.

The goal of the Corporate campaign is to raise \$1,100,000. To date \$275,000 has been raised.

Raising nearly \$2 million is not an easy task. Combine that difficulty with the need to develop the project from scratch and to meet the funding guidelines and requirements of outside agencies and one can see why the current multiplex campaign has been far from perfect. However, progress is being made in raising the necessary funds and as the Multiplex construction continues the enthusiasm for the project is building. The Committee is confident that it will be able to raise its target over the coming weeks but the Campaign needs your help. If you have pledged to the project please forward your contribution and for those who are undecided please don't miss out on a chance to be part of local history.

For further information on the progress of the Russell Regional Multiplex please visit the Town of Russell website at russellmb.com. If you have any questions or comments regarding the facility please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Multiplex Funding Campaign Committee. The Committee members are Chris Radford, Bruce Christopher, Alan Stanchuk, Symantha Dunn, Keith Popp, Eldon Montgomery and Terry Rolfe.