

## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

# Alberta Blue Cross® encourages Alberta Indigenous communities to apply for a \$50,000 Built Together grant

In recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day, Alberta Blue Cross® is encouraging Indigenous communities across Alberta to apply for the Built Together grant program. The program provides a \$50,000 grant annually to an Alberta Indigenous community to promote wellbeing by supporting active living infrastructure.

Since its creation in 2013, Built Together has supported a variety of infrastructure projects in Indigenous communities ranging from walking trails to hockey rinks.

One of these community spaces is Alexander First Nation's ice rink. Alexander First Nation brings vibrancy to their community by blending cultural traditions and practices with modern amenities and services. Part of this mission includes prioritizing access to recreational opportunities. In 2023, Alexander First Nation applied for and received a Built Together grant to aid in replacing their old, deteriorating ice rink with an upgraded one.

"The ability to access grants such as the Built Together grant provides our members with the opportunity to lead healthy, active lives and, more importantly, have fun across all ages and seasons," says Jody Kootenay, director of the Alexander First Nation Education. "We are very grateful for the funding."

This rink not only encourages active living but stands as a hub for all community members to connect on the ice and the bleachers. The Alexander First Nation ice rink includes infrastructure to support ice hockey, ball hockey, pickleball and basketball.

Other Indigenous communities across Alberta that have created and upgraded community supports through the Built Together grant include:

- Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement which paved the walking trail in the Paddle Prairie School field as part of its cancer prevention program. The trail is now accessible year-round for all community members.
- Elizabeth Metis Settlement which created a new skateboard park as an outlet for youth who face high drugs and suicide rates.
- Enoch Cree Nation which received a grant to build a new, safe outdoor playground for youth to replace the older, broken one.
- Maskwacis which built an outdoor gym near the Maskwacis Ambulance Authority as a space for community members and local emergency medical services to freely access a fitness centre.

The Built Together program is open to any Alberta-based community group for infrastructure projects that are publicly accessible and promote active living. This includes community leagues, school councils, municipalities and other non-profit organizations. Built Together is accepting applications until September 17. Apply now through the [Alberta Blue Cross community website](#).

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