



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Success Story

The trails along the disc golf.

Park & Trail Operator beautifies Town of Oxbow

DURING THE SUMMER, THE TOWN OF Oxbow can become quite a busy place – hosting its annual Canada Day event, the Bow Valley Jamboree Music Festival, and opening its trails and camp sites to locals and visitors alike.

The summer of 2023 was no different for the southeastern Saskatchewan town. Except this time, they had an extra set of hands to help out throughout the season.



TOWN OF OXBOW,
SASKATCHEWAN

Canada

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada



Zac Spittal with our disc golf installed.

The town was able to hire Zac Spittal as a Park & Trail Operator to provide additional support during this busy time, thanks to funding from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Youth Employment Experience (YEE) program. This program, funded by the Government of Canada, is designed to build skills and remove barriers to employment for youth. The program further builds capacity in the parks and recreation sector by providing mentorship support to each youth throughout their work experience.

"We were so pleased to be able to hire someone who was so reliable, responsible, and such a great worker," says Treena Mohrbutter, the town's Community Development Officer. "This funding support meant we could employ Zac on our team and give him employment experience in Parks and Recreation and with Municipal Government."

In his role as Park & Trail Operator, Spittal had many different responsibilities. He maintained the town's trails, campgrounds, and baseball diamond – cutting grass and ensuring these spaces were ready for people to use.

He also helped install new gravel around the town, a new disc golf course along the trails, and a new seasonal kayak dock. Mohrbutter says Spittal's past experience in the oil fields and construction came in handy when working on these installations.

"We've received numerous compliments about our trails and our campgrounds this year," Mohrbutter says. "People told us they have never looked better."



The trails along the disc golf.

She adds that Spittal even worked directly with visitors to the town's recreation sites – welcoming them, giving them directions, and collecting their entrance fees to the campground.

These jobs helped the youth learn a wide set of skills, including recreation maintenance and how to work with people.

"Zac did not have a lot of experience in the customer service industry, and dealing with patrons when he started the job," Mohrbutter says. "Now, he knows how to work with all personality types, which will help him in his future career."

She says she also saw Spittal grow both professionally and personally – and noticed he had an improved sense of confidence by the end of the summer.

"At the beginning, Zac would often phone his manager and ask what he should do," Mohrbutter says. "But by the end of his internship, he wasn't second-guessing himself anymore and was able to make decisions on his own."

Overall, she says the town was incredible grateful for the funding support which allowed them to hire a hardworking, dedicated employee who wouldn't have otherwise had the opportunity.

The job placement was so successful that Mohrbutter says she would like to hire Spittal again next summer.

"Zac was perfect for the role. He was always early, and a super hard worker – to the point where you'd almost have to tell him to stop working," she laughs. "This was a great opportunity for Zac, and for our town." 🍁