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For Immediate Release

## **Building Communities Grant Program Announces nearly \$47,000 in Support of Community Initiatives**

We're proud to announce that \$46,730 will be awarded this spring through the Building Communities Grant Program — a reflection of Sunrise Credit Union's ongoing commitment to empowering meaningful projects and strengthening our communities.

For this spring's intake, we received over 50 applications from across Westman and the Parkland area. After meticulously reviewing each application, five worthwhile projects were selected to receive funding, each representing a diverse aspect of our community, based on the criteria outlined in the guidelines.

"It's truly inspiring to witness the ongoing enthusiasm for the Building Communities Grant Program, with each intake consistently receiving over 50 applications," said Tim Klassen, President and CEO of Sunrise Credit Union. "We are proud to support five new initiatives this spring that not only strengthen the fabric of our communities but also foster sustainable, long-term impact. By investing in local projects, we help ensure that our dollars stay within our communities—supporting local economies, creating opportunities, and building a more resilient future for everyone."

The Virden Auditorium Theatre Restoration Project will receive \$20,000 in much-needed funding through the Facilities Construction or Improvement Capital Grant category of the grant program. A cornerstone of cultural life in Westman and Southeastern Saskatchewan for over 111 years, the theatre has long served as a creative hub for local performers and audiences alike. The funding will support critical upgrades including new seating, improved lighting, updated railings and carpet, and much-needed repairs to the flooring, lobby, and stage areas.

The RM of Pipestone Handivan Service, a vital community initiative for over 35 years, is receiving funding to enhance its transportation program. This service provides safe, accessible, and affordable rides for residents attending medical appointments and social engagements. Facing a shortage of volunteer drivers due to the current van's difficulty of use, the purchase of a newer, easier-to-operate vehicle is expected to encourage more volunteers and improve overall community safety.

The Sandy Lake - Elphinstone Handivan Project will receive a \$10,000 grant through the Individual and Community Well Being category of the grant program as well. The Sandy Lake - Elphinstone Handivan services a different geographic area than the RM of Pipestone Handivan, but their mission is similar; to provide safe and affordable transportation to members of their community. As a registered non-profit organization, the handivan is 100% operated by community volunteers. The funding will go toward the purchase of a new, fuel-efficient van.

The Burrows Trail Arts Council, who services the Parkland region, will receive a \$5,000 grant through the Arts, Culture and Sport category of the grant program. Their organization is working to make arts and culture more accessible in their region by bringing in 4-time world hoop dancing champion, Dallas Arcand, to speak at local schools. Arcand will be in full regalia and share his knowledge about hoop dancing and his culture, perform a flute and drum demonstration and a full 13 hoop dance. The presentations will take place at local schools for students and staff, although community members are invited to attend as well.

The Christian Heritage School in Brandon will receive \$1,730.68 through the Arts, Culture and Sport category to create a “storybook orchard” on school grounds. Featuring ten apple trees and story walk signage, the orchard will serve as a literacy-rich green space, accessible to students and the broader community. Located directly in front of the school, it will promote outdoor learning and engagement for years to come.

Since its launch in the fall of 2023, the Building Communities Grant Program has invested \$178,048.68 to 16 projects and initiatives, each significantly impacting and enriching our communities. The next intake period for the program will be in the fall of 2025, offering more opportunities to inspire and shape our community's future.

### **About Sunrise Credit Union**

Sunrise Credit Union was formed in 2008 and offers personalized service to approximately 35,000 members across 19 branches. Sunrise Credit Union serves Baldur, Boissevain, Brandon, Cypress River, Deloraine, Grandview, Hartney, Holland, Laurier, Melita, Minnedosa, Reston, Sandy Lake, Shoal Lake, Ste. Rose du Lac, Strathclair, Treherne, Virden, and Waskada.

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