



# DIDSBURY REVIEW

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## Senior park breaks ground

*Tamara Cunningham, Didsbury Review*

Seniors will be able to work up a sweat in a new senior wellness park that broke ground in Didsbury last week. Seniors Support Services brought \$8,000 worth of strength and cardio machines to encourage the over-50 crowd to step it up.

The four machines will be placed in the playground at Didsbury Memorial Complex today.

"It is centrally located so seniors walking along the centennial trail or getting ready for lawn bowling can warm up or cool down," said Lois Wright, office liaison for Didsbury Seniors Support Services.

Anyone can use the equipment, which is geared to work each part of the body, although it's built specifically for older adults.

"Oh seniors will definitely be using this. I will be one of the first ones trying it out," said Jean Freeman, grant coordinator.

She went shopping for the equipment after receiving a \$17,000 grant from the federal government. Eight thousand of that went towards the wellness park.

Come Tuesday when the equipment is set up, she and other members of Senior Support Services will be giving people lessons on the machines, although there are also instructions on the equipment.

"It is too bad it is being put in now. We had hoped to put it in earlier so there'd be at least two weeks for people to use this," Freeman said, as flurries whisked through the air outside the old train station.

"Maybe people will still go on the equipment over winter."

On Thursday Freeman handed out a booklet and pictures showing a crowd of 15 lingering at the old train station what will be installed this week. It was news to Bea Niedersteiner.

She hasn't seen the like before, but she is looking forward to having the equipment within walking distance of her home. It will get her out and perhaps they can even create a club that goes there together every week, Niedersteiner said.

"Anything that keeps us young – and exercise keeps you young – is good news," added Gladys McTaggart. "It's much better to be outside with company than in your house."

Placing the equipment in the playground is meant to encourage social interaction with all age levels. Grandparents can go to the park with their grandchildren and let them play while they work out. The fitness machines are also made for two, so seniors can buddy up during their workout.

"Maybe if this works out and people like it we will get another grant to add more equipment," Freeman said.

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