Welcome to the 2013 Year End Report of the Neighbourhood Planning Section. The 2013 Report is intended to provide information about the various programs and services offered by the Neighbourhood Planning Section, highlight some of the important initiatives and projects from the year, and look ahead to 2014.

The Neighbourhood Planning Section is one of five Sections within the City of Saskatoon’s Planning and Development Division. The Neighbourhood Planning Section includes a diverse range of programs:

- Attainable Housing;
- Neighbourhood Revitalization Initiatives and Programs;
- Urban Design;
- Local Area Planning; and
- Neighbourhood Safety and Safe Growth.

The Neighbourhood Planning Section also provides planning assistance to the Business Improvement Districts, collaborates on major projects with other agencies and Civic Departments, and offers educational opportunities to the public about the planning process.

The Neighbourhood Planning Section is one of five Sections within the City of Saskatoon’s Planning and Development Division.
Construction of Phase I of the 20th Street West Streetscape Master Plan was completed. This project was located between Avenues E and F in Riversdale, and included innovative artwork and environmental initiatives.

In 2013, the Placemaker Program was the focus of public engagement for current art work, and a new Call for Proposals was issued that drew interest from local, national and international artists.

The Mayfair-Kelsey Woodlawn Local Area Plan was underway throughout 2013. Fourteen public meetings were held in the community as well as four meetings directly related to safety. In addition, five safety audits, a safety survey of area businesses, and neighbour to neighbour surveys were conducted.

City Council adopted the new ten year 2013-2022 Housing Business Plan to guide the Attainable Housing Program.

The new Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant Program was approved, consolidating two similar programs into one.

New holiday lights were installed on 3rd Avenue and Central Avenue, which elicited numerous positive comments from the public.

Nine applications were received under the Vacant Lot and Adaptive Reuse Program, as well as three applications under the provisions for Downtown Housing.

The new City Centre Plan was endorsed in late 2013. This Plan lays out the vision for the City Centre to ensure the Downtown remains the heart of commercial, office, retail and high-density residential activity in Saskatoon and the region.
The City of Saskatoon, through the Neighbourhood Planning Section, plays an important role in encouraging and facilitating the creation of attainable housing.
ATTAINABLE HOUSING

Housing is a non-traditional role for most municipalities. However, the City of Saskatoon, through the Neighbourhood Planning Section, plays an important role in encouraging and facilitating the creation of attainable housing. The tools used to increase the range and supply of attainable housing includes policy, incentives, research, partnerships and education.

WHAT IS ATTAINABLE HOUSING?

Attainable housing ranges from transitional units for those at risk of homelessness to entry level ownership units for individuals just starting out in the work force. The City supports four broad categories of attainable housing:

- Affordable Rental – subsidized units for low income households including transitional and supported units.
- Purpose-Built Rental – market priced units protected from condo conversions.
- Affordable Ownership – modest units with down payment grants.
- Entry-Level Ownership – modest units for first time buyers.

2013 – 2022 HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN

In 2013, City Council made a commitment to continue supporting the creation of new housing units across the attainable housing continuum for the next ten years through the adoption of the 2013 – 2022 Housing Business Plan. The many initiatives in the ten year plan are designed to support the target set by City Council in 2007 of 500 new units per year.

New initiatives in the ten year plan include a points system for capital grants to ensure that proposals address the City’s housing priorities and a supplemental grant to encourage the construction of affordable rental housing in areas of the city that lack it.

2013 RESULTS

In 2013, the City exceeded its targets for all types of attainable housing with 629 new units counted as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSING TYPE</th>
<th>TARGET</th>
<th>2013 RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Built Rental</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Ownership</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Rental</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Suites (Purpose Built Rental)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Level Ownership</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500 units</strong></td>
<td><strong>629 units</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hartford Heights – The Hartford Heights project, constructed by Innovative Residential Inc., was recognized as the first Energy Star qualified multi-unit residential rental development in Canada. Hartford Heights is a forty-unit project located in the Blairmore Suburban Centre that includes both affordable rental units and purpose-built rental units.

Ginger Lofts – Construction was completed on the Ginger Lofts project by the Jastek Group of Companies in 2013. This multi-year project located in the Willowgrove neighbourhood is the largest attainable ownership project constructed to date in Saskatoon and includes 100 affordable ownership units as well as 196 entry level market units.
Graduate House – The University of Saskatchewan completed Graduate House in 2013, the third of three student residences built with the assistance of the City’s attainable housing incentives. These 402 purpose-built rental units have significantly eased pressure on Saskatoon’s rental market.

Equity Building Program – The Equity Building Program, offered in partnership with Affinity Credit Union, allows entry level homebuyers to borrow up to five percent towards a down payment on any existing home in Saskatoon. In 2013, twenty-eight households purchased homes in twenty different neighbourhoods with the assistance of the Equity Building Program.

The City of Saskatoon’s Housing Business Plan focuses the available resources on creating housing units across the housing continuum – from transitional housing to modest homes suitable for first time buyers.

2013 results are in! Policy Tools, Financial Incentives, Partnerships, Research and Public Education are all used to achieve the goals of the Housing Business Plan.

In 2013, 629 NEW units were supported.

Success in achieving the City’s housing targets is achieved by the many community partners who use these tools to build new housing units.

- Work is expected to continue on implementing the community-led Plan to End Homelessness, written under the leadership of the United Way of Saskatoon and Area. It is expected that some of Saskatoon’s hardest to house individuals will be offered housing and supports under a “Housing First” model beginning in 2014.

- The Administration is working to create a Memorandum of Understanding with private land developers in 2014 to ensure an adequate supply of attainable housing in all new neighbourhoods. This is an important step to achieve the vision in the Official Community Plan that all new neighbourhoods provide a mix of housing types and forms reflective of the City’s population profile.
NEIGHBOURHOOD REVITALIZATION

The Neighbourhood Revitalization programs support growth and development in established neighbourhoods by providing development incentives, undertaking Local Area Plans, and participating in projects intended to enhance the quality of life in these neighbourhoods.

VACANT LOT AND ADAPTIVE REUSE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Since 2011, the Vacant Lot and Adaptive Reuse Incentive Program (VLAR) has approved 34 applications; with nine new applications in 2013. In addition three projects were approved in the Downtown program area and will receive tax abatements for their housing components.

The Riviera – This project was approved for a 25% tax abatement and will provide renovations to a four level, 16 unit rental complex. This project will help maintain quality residential units in the Downtown.

The Banks – This project in River Landing includes four distinct buildings: The Riverbend, The Current, The Bridge, and The Edgewater. The buildings are situated in the four corners of the lot creating a plaza in the centre; which will be open to the public. This development includes 160 residential units ranging in size from 390 square feet to 1,422 square feet, with a mix of bachelor, one bedroom, two bedroom, and live/work units. The project also includes a commercial component comprised of grants and tax abatements.

Incentive Programs

Supporting Facade Conservation and Enhancement, Building Renovation and new Construction.

- PUBLIC POLICY GOALS
- TAX ABATEMENTS
- GRANTS

The Vacant Lot and Adaptive Reuse Incentive Program (VLAR) offers incentives in the form of grants and tax abatements to eligible projects. The VLAR Program also provides incentives for Downtown housing in the form of tax abatements.

VLAR PROGRAM

36 applications since 2011

Incentives of $2,424,116

The VLAR Program evaluates applications based upon a set of public policy objectives.

Public incentives includes the value of grants as well as the estimated foregone tax revenue through the VLAR Program.
of ground floor commercial space totalling 21,784 square feet. The estimated total project cost for the entire development is $39 million. It will receive a five year tax abatement for the residential components.

The Shangri-La – This project is a 94 unit, nine storey condominium; consisting of seventy-seven 660 sq ft one-bedroom units, seven 852 sq ft two-bedroom units, seven 1190 sq ft two-bedroom units, two 1000 sq ft penthouse units, and a 1190 sq ft penthouse unit. The total estimated capital investment for this project is $18 M, which includes the land and development costs. It is located in the City Park neighbourhood.

Municipal World – The VLAR Program was recently featured in the January 2014 issue of Municipal World. The article, “Saskatoon’s Vacant Lot & Adaptive Re-Use Strategy, a novel approach for incentive funding in urban renewal,” by Harry Cleghorn, Lesley Anderson, Tony Gkotsis, and Pamela Welbourn, discussed urban renewal strategies in 22 municipalities throughout Canada and highlighted Saskatoon’s approach of offering financial incentives through the VLAR Program.

THE FACADE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Municipal Enterprise Zone (MEZ) Program was established in May 2002. The program was designed to be a temporary initiative to help attract commercial, industrial, and residential developments within specific established neighbourhoods. The MEZ program was discontinued in 2010, with the exception of the Facade Appearance Grant program which concluded as of December 31, 2013.

With the conclusion of the final component of the Municipal Enterprise Zone, the Administration received approval for a new Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant Program. The remaining funds from the MEZ program were used as seed funding for a new reserve to support this new Grant Program.

The new Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant program is a combination of two existing façade enhancement programs and is intended to provide a simplified application, approval, and administrative process, resulting in improved customer service. It is a joint effort between the Heritage, Urban Design, and Neighbourhood Revitalization work teams. As of January 1, 2014, Planning & Development is now accepting applications under this program.

FAÇADE APPEARANCE GRANTS

91 applications received
$296,162 in grants

Since 2002, $2500 per street-facing commercial façade was available.
PLEASANT HILL VILLAGE

The Pleasant Hill Village project began in the fall of 2006 and is expected to reach completion in 2015. The project to date has seen a major transformation that has included new home construction, the building and use of the new St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre, and the construction of new park space.

In 2013, major construction work was underway once again in Pleasant Hill Village. New cul-de-sacs were built at Columbian Place (formerly Avenue O South) and 19th Street. The old roadways were removed and the remaining space will form part of the park.

Phase II of the Grace Adam Park development also began in 2013, and construction will continue into 2014 to complete the new park space. Many of the park features, including irrigation and sprinklers, have been installed. An exchange of Municipal Reserve to accommodate the new park space was approved by City Council in 2013.

The existing two housing developments, Parkview Green, and Pleasant Hill Solar Village, experienced significant interest from potential purchasers in 2013. In July, 2013, the Administration brought forward a proposal to undertake a Rent to Own program to help sell the remaining ten condominium units in these two developments. The proposal was approved by City Council. However, interest and sales picked up into the fall, and at the end of the year, only three units remained for sale. The remaining units have all been sold as of February 20, 2014. Therefore, the Rent to Own program was never put in place. It will remain a useful model that could be referenced in the future if needed.

In 2013, preparations were also underway to release the remaining three parcels of land for development in Pleasant Hill Village. A new subdivision application was initiated and work began on the formal rezoning on the remaining parcels.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2014

- 2014 will be a significant year for Pleasant Hill Village. Plans are in place to rezone the remaining three parcels, issue a Request for Proposals for development of these three sites, and wrap up construction in Phase II of Grace Adam Park.

- The VLAR Program will be amended in early 2014 to support the goals of the City Centre Plan. Anticipated amendments include the provision of incentives for the construction of parking structures, as well as projects that result in a gain of new office space in the Downtown.

- As of January 1, 2014, the new Façade Conservation and Enhancement Grant will be accepting applications. Project applications will be adjudicated quarterly, on a first-come, first serve basis. The first adjudication is scheduled for early March.
LOCAL AREA PLANNING

Local Area Planning (LAP) is a community-based approach to developing comprehensive neighbourhood plans. It provides residents, business owners, property owners and other stakeholders direct input into the future of their community. LAP participants work to develop a vision, identify issues, develop goals, and outline strategies to ensure the long-term success of their neighbourhood. Once completed, a LAP sets out objectives and policies to guide the growth and development of the neighbourhood.

Twelve neighbourhoods were initially identified for Local Area Plans in 1997. The Varsity View LAP is the last of the initial twelve to be completed. During the 2011 Civic Service Review, three more neighbourhoods were added to the list: Mayfair/Kelsey-Woodlawn, Meadowgreen and Montgomery Place.

VARSITY VIEW LOCAL AREA PLAN

In 2013, the Varsity View Local Area Plan has moved into the final steps prior to City Council adoption. The Varsity View LAP Committee has remained engaged throughout the creation of the report by reviewing individual sections, as each was written, and then reviewing the full draft report. The edited report has been circulated through Administration for comment and the final draft has been reviewed by the Varsity View LAP Committee. A neighbourhood open house will be held in early-2014, with the final report expected to be presented to City Council for consideration in April 2014.

MAYFAIR & KELSEY-WOODLAWN LOCAL AREA PLAN

The majority of public consultation for the Mayfair & Kelsey-Woodlawn Local Area Plan was completed in 2013; beginning with visioning in January 2013 and ending with Municipal Services in December. In addition, an information meeting on Business Improvement Districts was held and numerous safety audits were performed over the summer of 2013.
LAP participants work to develop a vision, identify issues, develop goals, and outline strategies to ensure the long-term success of their neighbourhood.
In total, there were fourteen public meetings held in 2013 for the Mayfair & Kelsey-Woodlawn Local Area Plan:

- Visioning
- Land Use and Zoning
- Heritage, History, and Culture
- Business Improvement Districts
- Neighbourhood Safety (3)
- North Downtown Master Plan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic (SIAST) growth
- Traffic (2)
- Fall Recap and Next Steps Meeting
- Parks and Community Gardens
- Safety Update and Infill Development
- Municipal Services

The LAP team also worked together with the Traffic Management Section to undertake a pilot Neighbourhood Traffic Management Plan with the community. Two meetings were held, one to identify issues with the community, and one to present the proposed Plan back to the community.

THE JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

The report for The Junction Improvement Strategy was finalized in 2013. This included completing the recommendations and the Concept Map; circulating the Strategy to other Departments and divisions for review; hosting an Open House in June 2013 to present draft recommendations to the public; and conducting public consultation with youth and First Nations groups in the area.

The Junction Improvement Strategy was brought forward to City Council in April 2014.

LOCAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

One of the most significant LAP Implementation achievements of 2013 involved a large-scale land use change application for 345 City Park properties. These changes were recommended in the City Park LAP and approved by City Council in mid-2013. The goal of the land use changes was to protect the existing character of the neighbourhood by assigning appropriate zoning designations that reflected the current use of each property.

Pursuing the implementation of an LAP is a long-term process.

Recommendations are prioritized based on the following factors:

**COMMUNITY INPUT**

**AVAILABLE RESOURCES/PROGRAMS**

**AGE OF LAP**

**LEVEL OF EFFORT TO COMPLETE**

**DEPENDENCY ON OTHER DIVISIONS/DEPARTMENTS**

208 out of 299 LAP recommendations completed

23 recommendations were completed in 2013

Local Area Planning gives community members a chance to shape the future of their community.

15% of LAP recommendations relate to City programs or offerings

18% of all LAP recommendations are land use based

In 2013, 345 properties in City Park were rezoned based on the LAP.

As a comprehensive community planning tool, LAPs can respond to residents’ desires for the future, as well as their concerns.
In addition, 23 Local Area Plan recommendations (excluding safety) were completed in 2013. Twelve of these recommendations were under Transportation, Circulation & Parking and five of those were within City Park. The Transportation Division conducted numerous traffic studies within this neighbourhood over the past couple years looking at traffic calming measures and pedestrian safety.

In 2013, Neighbourhood Planning collaborated with Community Development, Leisure Services, and Parks, to prepare an assessment tool that would be used to assist in prioritizing park development and improvement projects. The goal was to identify and prioritize outstanding projects that have come from:

- Local Area Plan park-related recommendations;
- Outstanding Safety Audit park-related recommendations;
- Outstanding parks rehabilitation and deficiency items; and
- Community requested park recreation amenities.

A report was presented to Planning and Operations Committee, and approved by City Council in mid-2013. This will lead to the implementation of a number of outstanding LAP recommendations in several neighbourhoods. Funding from the Dedicated Lands Account was identified to be used for these upgrades.

**Saskatoon Regional Food System Assessment and Action Plan**

After discussing issues related to grocery store access, the Westmount Local Area Plan (LAP) recommended a city-wide food system assessment be conducted.

In 2012 and 2013, numerous partners were involved in directing a consultant to create a Food System Assessment for the Saskatoon Region. Partners included the Saskatoon Health Region, University, City of Saskatoon, CHEP, Saskatchewan Agriculture, and various producer groups.

The consultant conducted public focus groups, interviews, and extensive research to come up with the Assessment and recommendations to improve food security, production, and access in the region. Most of the recommendations are directed at the partner organizations – CHEP, Health Region, University, and the City.

The Saskatoon Regional Food System Assessment and Action Plan was presented to City Council in early 2014.
• The Varsity View LAP will be presented to the community at an Open House in early 2014, and will proceed through Municipal Planning Commission and City Council for approval.

• The Meadowgreen LAP will kick-off in Spring 2014. This will be the 14th neighbourhood to participate in the comprehensive community-based LAP process.

• With only Montgomery Place remaining on the list of neighbourhoods approved by City Council to receive an LAP, work has begun on the updating of the Neighbourhood Monitoring Report (NMR). The NMR is a key tool designed by Planning & Development in 2007 to observe changes in neighbourhoods through the comparison of a variety of data. The results of the NMR assist in identifying neighbourhoods in need of municipal intervention, potentially through the LAP program. The indicators include various statistics related to land use, population change, crime, housing, employment/income, infrastructure, and traffic.

• Community engagement will begin in 2014 to update the South Caswell Concept Plan. As preparations are underway for Saskatoon Transit to relocate to the Civic Operations Centre, technical information relating to the site and buildings is now available. Working with the community and stakeholders, the Concept Plan will be updated in preparation for redevelopment.

• During the 2014 Business Plan and Budget Deliberations, the Safety Pathway has been approved as a capital project beginning in 2014. This project will implement the “Rails with Trails” model of a multi-use pathway along the Canadian Pacific Railway corridor, connecting from the existing pathway that runs from Idylwyld Drive to Avenue D, all the way to Avenue W. This pathway was recommended in the Pleasant Hill, Riversdale and West Industrial Local Area Plans.
NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY

Since the Safe Growth and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) philosophy was adopted by City Council in 2008, the application of CPTED principles have evolved to become a standard part of Community Safety Reviews and the review process for all municipal developments, facilities, and structures, as well as private Neighbourhood Concept Plans. The purpose of the program is to add value to the existing civic programs and help make our City safer.

The Neighbourhood Safety program consists of five parts:
1. Creation of neighbourhood safety plans in conjunction with Local Area Plans;
2. Neighbourhood Safety recommendation implementation;
3. Safe Growth/CPTED Review Committee;
4. Ad hoc requests for assistance from affected neighbourhoods, Administration and referrals from City Council; and
5. Program support.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY IN LOCAL AREA PLANNING

In 2013, the Safety team supported the Mayfair & Kelsey-Woodlawn Local Area Plan (LAP). The process included introducing the principles of CPTED to the community, working with the community to identify safety concerns, and supporting the community’s vision for a safer neighbourhood through the implementation of recommendations. Activities with the community included a CPTED principles community workshop, four community meetings directly related to safety, five safety audits, a safety survey of area businesses, and neighbour to neighbour surveys that were conducted by community members with Neighbourhood Safety support. The Neighbourhood Safety section of the LAP is currently being written and will be vetted through the community and administration.
Neighbourhood Safety recommendations are implemented through the LAP Implementation Capital Project. Recommendations are prioritized for implementation and over half of the top 100 recommendations are safety related. At the end of 2013, there were 193 neighbourhood safety recommendations identified through the LAPs. To date, 123 neighbourhood safety recommendations have been implemented, 15 of which were completed in 2013.

SAFE GROWTH AND CPTED REVIEWS
Safe Growth and CPTED reviews are an important part of the Neighbourhood Safety program. The core CPTED Review Committee consists of trained staff from various civic departments, including Community Services, Saskatoon Light and Power and Police Service. The Review Committee reviews all applications for new construction or major renovations affecting City of Saskatoon structures, facilities, and developments with any public access.

In 2013, there were a total of 26 CPTED reviews completed. These reviews included 11 Neighbourhood Concept Plans/Master Plans, three parks, 10 facilities/structures, including the Traffic Bridge replacement and the North Commuter Parkway, and two streetscape Master Plans. Two of the largest and most unique reviews included the North Downtown Master Plan and the Green Bridge in the Evergreen neighbourhood.

The Neighbourhood Safety program also provides Safe Growth/CPTED training opportunities to civic staff as well as people outside of the corporation. In 2013, there were 20 participants in the training course, of which 15 were civic staff, and 5 (25%) were external to the corporation. Since training began, 145 civic staff and 54 external people have been trained in Safe Growth/CPTED. A Safe Growth/CPTED training course is scheduled for 2014.
AD HOC REQUESTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

The Neighbourhood Safety program managed a number of ad hoc requests for assistance. The most significant being the Dan Worden Park Public Safety Project. Walter Murray Collegiate Institute’s (WMCI) Student Teacher Advisory Group (STAG) chose to address the issues of public safety and perceptions of safety within and around Dan Worden park in 2013. WMCI invited Neighbourhood Safety, through their City Councillor and the Parks Division, to support their work towards a solution. 2013 activity included supporting the student group as they established a safety action plan and helping them carry it out. Neighbourhood Safety activities included four meetings with students and staff, three safety audits, a student-planner partnership in a community meeting for adjacent seniors, the inclusion of Holy Cross High School, a park cleanup involving students, staff and civic staff, and a student design charrette to develop a new concept plan for the park. Three classrooms of students participated in the cleanup and 40 seniors participated in the safety meeting. According to the Vice Principal of WMCI, this is the first time in the history of the system that public and separate high school students and staff were actively working together on an issue that affects both.

STREET ACTIVITY STEERING COMMITTEE

The Neighbourhood Safety Coordinator participates in the Street Activity Steering Committee (SASC). This Committee was established by City Council in 2012 and oversees the management and operations of the Community Support Program (CSP) pilot project. The Coordinator was responsible for the Street Activity Baseline Study Update, which was conducted in 2013. This study looked at how perceptions of safety and location of negative street activity and program awareness have changed over the first year of the CSP operations. The Neighbourhood Safety Coordinator ensures the Service Provider Advisory Group meets with the Committee on a regular basis. The CSP pilot project is slated for review in early 2014.
2014 will be a pivotal year for the Community Support Program (CSP) pilot project. Neighbourhood Safety oversaw the Street Activity Baseline Study Update. Although the pilot project will continue until July 2014, any decision on its permanence will be made by City Council in early 2014.

The Meadowgreen LAP is slated to start in spring of 2014. The Neighbourhood Safety team will be an integral part of helping the community be safe and feel safe. Community meetings, workshops, safety audits, and risk assessments will all be part of the Neighbourhood Safety section of the LAP.

Neighbourhood Safety will continue to work with the students and staff of Walter Murray Collegiate Institute, Holy Cross High School, and the surrounding seniors and residents as they work towards a safer Dan Worden Park. A Concept Plan will be solidified, the student group is looking for partnerships and funding to address the issues in the area, and a final proposal and strategy to move forward will be completed in 2014.

The Neighbourhood Safety Program identifies educational materials and activities that support neighbourhood safety and ensure information is easily accessible by the public. In 2013, the Neighbourhood Safety Program worked with the City’s Immigration Diversity and Inclusion Consultant to develop a workshop, using the Safe at Home booklet, to be conducted in concert with Language Instructions for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes. These workshops will coincide with the safety and housing units being taught in the English language courses. The intention of the workshops is to cover the contents of the Safe at Home booklet with newcomers to Saskatoon and build on safety information already being distributed in Saskatoon. The objective of the Safe at Home workshop is to bring safety information to newcomers to Canada that may not have access to this information otherwise. The focus of the workshops will be to encourage people to get involved in their community and preventing the opportunity for crime by getting to know their neighbours. The class will be delivered concurrently with the Attainable Housing workshop, which is based on the City of Saskatoon’s Housing Handbook. The first workshop was held on the 28th of January, with additional workshops scheduled throughout 2014.
**URBAN DESIGN**

**STREETSCAPE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Streetscape development projects are complex and require the collaboration and cooperation of numerous sections across the Corporation to be completed successfully. The aim is to transform public places in key commercial districts by accentuating Saskatoon’s distinct identity and by bringing out the area’s sense of place. Typical streetscape improvements include corner bulbs and extended bus bulbs, sidewalk remediation with amenity strip, street trees, sidewalk lighting, street furniture, public art and special place-making features.

In 2013, the 20th Street West project from Avenues E to F was substantially completed. It included construction, as well as environmental and place-making innovations. Storm water is being captured with curb grates for the irrigation of street trees. The tree grates themselves are unique with location specific themes – buffalo, dragons and historic businesses. Bike service stations with tools and a foot operated tire pump will also be installed in the spring of 2014.

Community art projects were also part of the 20th Street West development. Two murals were completed by Heather Langford and Colin Farnan, local neighbourhood artists. The *Just Bee* sidewalk stencil art was created by Monique Martin. The *Written in Stone* poetry was written by prominent Saskatchewan author, Candace Savage.

The 25th Street extension opened in late 2013 and includes enhanced streetscaping and pedestrian amenities. Special gateway features at Idylwyld Drive will be built in 2014 to mark this important entrance to downtown.

Additionally, furniture was installed on 3rd Avenue and Central Avenue and new holiday lights lit up both of these avenues. On 3rd Avenue, newspaper stands designed to hold up to three newspaper vending machines are being piloted to provide appropriate and identifiable locations for the machines.

A concept plan for the Kensington Village Square and streetscape was prepared for Saskatoon Land. The design has been incorporated into the neighbourhood marketing material. Urban Design will continue to work with Saskatoon Land to develop the detailed design of the village square and construction will follow.

**URBAN DESIGN OPERATING PROGRAMS**

The Urban Design team oversees numerous programs that continue to enhance the commercial districts beyond the streetscape development projects.

**Placemaker Program**

This program has always been considered to be very unique to Saskatoon, as it provides access to art on a temporary basis, allowing places to change regularly for a nominal fee. Throughout 2013, the program underwent significant changes in response to a series of community engagement sessions (with a total of 450 participants) and to better align the program with the Culture Plan. Implementing the changes was a collaboration between the Urban Design and Community Initiatives teams.

Changes to the 2013 Placemaker Program included:

- Expanded district options to include areas outside of the 3 core BIDs.
Specific locations are no longer identified. Artists are open to propose any location within the BIDs and commercial areas specified in the Call for Proposals.

Artwork commissions are open with an amount between $5,000 and $10,000 depending on the location. This differs from previous commissions, paid at a rate of $1,500 per year for three years.

Variety of scale and medium are being encouraged. New options include two dimensional work as well as interventions, digital or sound media and performances.

The 3 year exhibition term is no longer required. Artists can propose long (up to 3 years), medium (e.g. 6 months or a season) and short (e.g. 2 weeks or during an event) exhibits.

Opportunities for local, national and international artists were enhanced.

Aboriginal and Métis content is encouraged.

Addition of “Meet the Artist” events upon artwork installation.

The recent changes have amplified the success of the program by providing 7 new and different types of artwork to the public. The changes have proven to be successful based on recent news and social media interest and community turnout at the Meet the Artist events. It is quite clear that the community is responding to the changes in a positive manner and the team is committed to continue enhancing the program in response to the needs of the community.

Heritage Promotion

All three core BIDs made use of the Heritage Promotion Grant in 2013, receiving up to $2,000 to support a heritage related initiative. As well, two Façade Grants were issued within the BIDs.

In 2013, Urban Design was contacted by the great-great-granddaughter of James Clinksill, when construction fencing went up around the Lululemon site at 118 21st Street West. James Clinksill was the first mayor of the City of Saskatoon, and a local merchant who established one of the first stores in the city. Inlaid in the sidewalk in front of the building, Clinksill was written in brass letters. Urban Design contacted the site contractor and had the brass letters removed to help preserve...
them. The brass letters were in good condition but the steel frame had rusted and needed to be replaced. The sidewalk was refurbished with a new brass frame and the letters have since been reinstalled following the completion of the site’s renovation.

Pedestrian Amenities
New district identity signs where installed in both the Broadway and Riversdale districts.

Flower Pots
The flower pot program adds a welcome splash of colour to the BIDs during the summer. In cooperation with the Parks Division, 654 flower pots were installed in the four BIDs and River Landing in 2013, an increase of 68 pots from 2012. The additional pots were placed in Riversdale (10), 3rd Avenue (25), River Landing (9) and Central Avenue (24). In 2014, the number of pots will increase again – Riversdale (16), Broadway (4) River Landing (2) – for a total of 676 flower pots.

Banners
In cooperation with Saskatoon Light & Power, Urban Design administers the street banner program which brings colour and animation to numerous streets in the City and helps community organizations promote themselves and their events. Urban Design accepts the applications; reviews graphics for compliance with the City’s Banner Policy; and schedules the installation. Saskatoon Light & Power installs, maintains and removes the banners. In 2013, 449 banners were installed.

One particularly interesting banner application was received from Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan, called the Shakespeare Said banner project. They were requesting to install banners designed by Georges Vanier elementary school art students at locations near the festival site. Urban Design worked with them to cost share the purchase and installation of new banner hardware on light poles that did not have hardware. Furthermore, the original request of 10
banners expanded to 69 banners resulting in every participating student getting their banner displayed. At the unveiling event, the first banners were installed in front of the media and the students, who were dressed in Shakespearean costumes. The Shakespeare Said banners were displayed on street poles from Spadina Crescent at Queen Street to 21st Street, along 21st Street to the Midtown Mall, as well as four banners at Georges Vanier School. Monique Martin, the visual arts educator leading the project, went on to win the Lieutenant Governor’s Arts Award for the Shakespeare Said project.

MAINTENANCE
As well as designing and constructing streetscapes, Urban Design oversees the long term maintenance of each streetscape project. Because peoples’ experience in the districts is very important, a high standard of maintenance of the streetscaped streets is prioritized. Over time, the areas with streetscaping have grown and it was becoming difficult for the City’s Facilities Division to provide maintenance services in a timely way because it was additional work outside of their regular duties. In 2013, Urban Design and Facilities solved this issue by hiring a carpenter, whose time was 50% dedicated to streetscape maintenance. This has resulted in quick response times to reported maintenance requests and issues.
• 20th Street West and Central Avenue will both have further streetscaping construction underway in 2014.

• Gateway features at 25th Street and Idylwyld Drive will be installed.

• Side street improvements on 10th Street and Broadway will be implemented and new bike racks will be installed throughout the Broadway BID to replace the tree guard “bike parking” that was originally installed. These new bike racks are now required since the trees on Broadway are getting large and the tree guards have had to be removed so as not to damage the trees.

• In 2014, the initial analysis will begin for the Idylwyld Drive Streetscape Improvement Plan. It involves the design and implementation of a comprehensive streetscape plan for Idylwyld Drive from the Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge to Circle Drive. The redevelopment of Idylwyld Drive as an enhanced multi-modal corridor will contribute to pedestrian, cyclist, and transit use. This project will involve a traffic study, the design of a streetscape improvement plan, as well as phased construction, which may utilize an incremental approach to capitalize on the time-sensitivity of this intervention. An incremental approach is when inexpensive, temporary materials are used in the short term and are replaced by permanent, long-lasting materials after the public has tested the design thoroughly. This approach is currently used by the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program in the Transportation Division.

• Urban Design has been involved with Saskatoon’s first Green Bridge in the Evergreen Neighbourhood, first developing a green bridge concept plan for Saskatoon Land and now as an advisor during construction. This bridge will be a pedestrian and cycling connection between the residential and the commercial/industrial areas. Construction has begun and is anticipated to be completed in 2015.

• Beginning in 2013, Urban Design has begun to do more extensive environmental site assessments as part of streetscape development projects. These assessments will improve worker safety on site and determine how to handle contaminated material if and when it is encountered. This practice is now required in anticipation of changes to provincial legislation around contaminated sites. More work will occur on this in 2014 to determine a standard practice for these assessments. Further investigation is required to fully determine how this will impact project budgets and schedules.
The City Centre Plan is intended to guide Downtown development in a sustainable manner as we grow to over 500,000 residents.
The new City Centre Plan was endorsed by City Council in late 2013. The City Centre Plan is a comprehensive planning document for the Downtown and the key areas along the corridors leading to the Downtown. Rapid growth, especially on the periphery of the City, and major developments in and around the Downtown has put pressure on the city’s centre. The purpose of the City Centre Plan is to refocus the vision for the city’s centre to ensure the Downtown remains the heart of commercial, office, retail and high-density residential activity in Saskatoon and the region. The Plan is intended to guide Downtown development in a sustainable manner as we grow to over 500,000 residents.

The City Centre Plan identifies 12 key strategies that represent the goals and objectives of the Plan. Focus will be placed on achieving:

1. A strong and unique retail centre as a destination for the region
2. A new west Downtown
3. A new network of public spaces throughout the city to serve all seasons
4. A broad network of pedestrian priority streets
5. Improved connections to surrounding neighbourhoods
6. Advancement of arts and culture within the City Centre
7. Stronger existing neighbourhoods
8. Improved transportation, transit, bike, and parking systems
9. Sustainable design
10. City policies to foster private and public investment
11. Residential development as a priority
12. Business development as a priority

The goal of the City Centre Plan is to create an environment where people want to live and work, and set the stage for market forces to drive development. The Plan does not force development to the Downtown, but instead, sets out to create an urban environment that will attract people to the area and foster the growth of residential, business, and cultural uses.

One way the City Centre Plan intends to achieve this goal is through a series of streetscape improvements in an effort to improve the physical appearance of the Downtown, and make the Downtown more comfortable for pedestrians. Improvements are proposed to start as incremental installations, similar to programs utilized in places like New York City. These low-cost improvements, such as improved cross walk zones and using planter installations to create public spaces, will be implemented over the short term. Larger streetscaping improvements will be presented to the Urban Design Committee so they can prioritize and schedule implementation.

Neighbourhood Planning continues to participate on the steering committee and technical task teams of this corporate initiative. The outcomes of this project will have direct impacts on many aspects of the Section’s work program, including Urban Design streetscaping projects and priorities, as well as the Local Area Planning process.
Looking Ahead to 2014

City Centre Plan

- Efforts will now shift to implementing the City Centre Plan, which is intended to be phased in over the next 15 to 20 years. The Plan divides the projects into near, mid, and long-term projects, as well as immediate implementation items that will address some key strategies that are considered a critical first step in addressing the recommendations of the City Centre Plan. The immediate implementation, including proposed new design guidelines for the Downtown, are expected to be implemented in the Spring of 2014. Several amendments are proposed to the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 8769 and Zoning Bylaw No. 8770, as well as some internal policies. A comprehensive Downtown parking study is proposed, as well as implementation of new tax incentives for office and structured parking developments.

Growing Forward, Shaping Saskatoon

- As community engagement begins on this project in 2014, Neighbourhood Planning will continue to play a key role. The community feedback and recommended actions from the Growing Forward initiative will inform the continuing work plan of all teams in the Neighbourhood Planning Section.