

# Planning in Saskatoon



*City of*  
**Saskatoon**  
*Community Engagement*

A Guide to City Planning & Development in Saskatoon





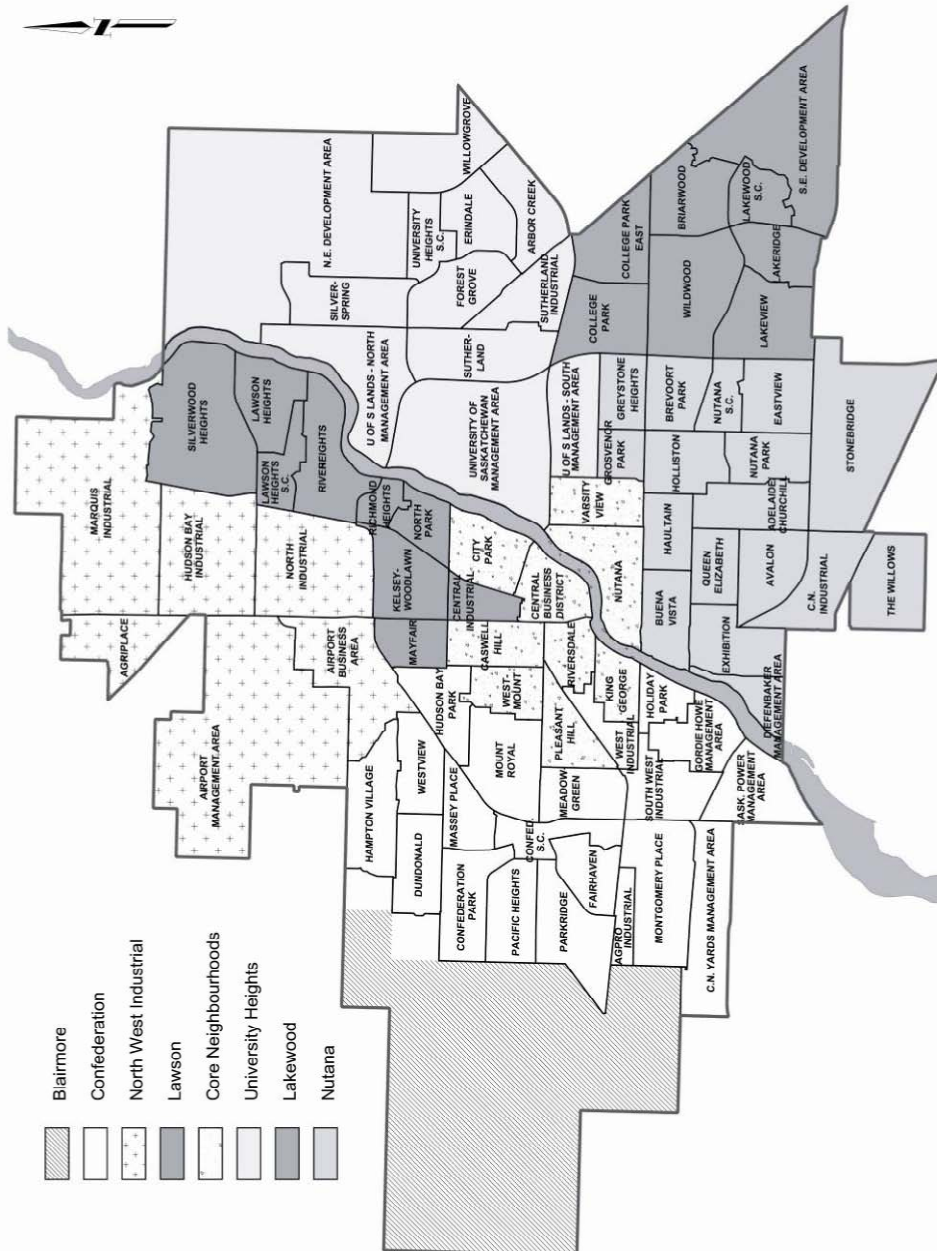
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The City of Saskatoon would like to thank staff members for their contributions to this valuable guide and acknowledges the City of Calgary for shared resources and consultation. Photo Credits: Comstock.ca & City of Saskatoon.

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# Planning in Saskatoon



*Saskatoon has always had a strong volunteer community. It's part of our pioneer spirit and unique cultural heritage. **A Guide to City Planning & Development in Saskatoon** is designed to*

*provide a quick reference for community association volunteers and members of the public interested in the city planning and development process.*

*During the Industrial Revolution, cities experienced explosive growth, becoming congested, polluted, unhealthy places to live. In the 20th century, a powerful lobby developed in North America to bring order to the chaos of urbanization. Today, modern planning provides the framework for growth and quality of life in our city.*

*"Planning in Saskatoon" outlines the tools used to plan and regulate development in the city. It is the second booklet in **A Guide to City Planning & Development in Saskatoon**.*

## What is Planning?

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) defines planning as "the scientific, aesthetic and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities." ([www.cip-icu.ca](http://www.cip-icu.ca))

Planning is fundamental to Saskatoon's growth and development. It is conducted in the interests of the entire community, reflecting a balanced view of the economic, social and environmental aspects of our community, now and in the future.

## Planning in Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, planning is governed by *The Planning and Development Act*. This legislation establishes the legal framework for local planning, identifies approving authorities and provides provincial statutory guidelines for the administration of local improvements. It also establishes the required procedures and relevant planning matters that need to be considered in preparing and implementing planning policies and making decisions on planning matters.

**The Planning &  
Development Act is  
available at  
[www.qp.gov.sk.ca](http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca)**

- The Act provides the City of Saskatoon with the authority to create a Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw to designate, subdivide and develop land.

## Planning in Saskatoon



The Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw are the main tools the City of Saskatoon uses to plan and regulate development of the City. These tools, along with other planning policies and regulations, aid City Planners, Committees of Council and City Council in making decisions and recommendations on city planning and development proposals.

- The City's Planning Branch, Development Services Branch and Land Branch are responsible for facilitating the planning and development process.

**In the late 1990s,  
Plan Saskatoon, a  
major public  
consultation  
exercise, helped  
form the basis for  
the City's current  
Development Plan  
and Zoning Bylaw.**



Community Services Department: (306) 975-2645  
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## Planning & Development at a Glance

### Province of Saskatchewan

The *Planning & Development Act* (P&D Act) governs all city planning and development in Saskatchewan.



### City of Saskatoon

The P&D Act provides authority to the City of Saskatoon to create a Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw to guide planning in Saskatoon.



### Planning & Implementation Tools

The City uses policies and other tools to plan development and a variety of approval processes and permits to regulate development in Saskatoon.

#### Planning for the Future

- District Planning
- Future Growth Planning
- Sector Plans
- Neighbourhood Concept Plans
- Downtown Plan
- Local Area Plans
- Heritage Conservation Program
- The Enterprise Zone Program
- Affordable Housing Program
- Urban Design Program
- Urban Reserves
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

#### Other Planning Considerations

- The City as Land Developer
- New Neighbourhood Development Process
- Mapping, GIS Products & Data Collection
- Planning Skills Training Program

#### Approvals, Permits & Licenses

- Development Permits
- Discretionary Use Approvals
- Minor Variances
- Sign Permits
- Subdivision of Land
- Business Licenses
- Building & Plumbing Permits
- Legalizing Existing Suites
- Condominium Approvals
- Radio Communication Tower Approvals

#### Appeals & Complaints

- Development Appeals
- Land Use Complaints

## **The Development Plan**



The Development Plan is a statutory plan established in accordance with the provisions of *The Planning and Development Act* and adopted by bylaw. It defines, directs and evaluates development, and guides City Council in making development and land use decisions.

By ensuring development takes place in an orderly and rational manner, the

Development Plan balances the environmental, social and economic needs of the community. It is intended to guide the growth and development of Saskatoon to a population of approximately 310,000 residents. Policies and guidelines are outlined for the following issues:

- city form, structure and development phasing
- land use designations and corresponding map
- residential, commercial and industrial land use policies
- holding areas and transitional land use areas
- parks and open space
- community services and facilities
- transportation
- public utilities
- local area plans
- urban design and design review
- heritage
- constraints to development
- social development
- implementation (Zoning Bylaw, Subdivision Bylaw, etc)
- specific area policies

**Refer to *How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals* booklet for more information on Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments.**

## **Land Use Designations**

The Development Plan divides the City into different land use designations – Residential, Downtown, Commercial, Suburban Centre, Industrial, Transitional Land Use Areas, Special Use Areas, Urban Holding Areas, Direct Control Districts and Mixed Use. Objectives and policies are set out for each. (See *Glossary in How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals* booklet.)

## **Core Neighbourhood Land Use Policy Districts**

The Development Plan contains specific land use and development policies for Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods: Caswell Hill, City Park, King George, Nutana, Pleasant Hill, Riversdale, Sutherland, Varsity View and Westmount. These policies are intended to enhance certainty about existing and proposed land uses, and



increase opportunity for public input into policy change through public consultation. (See *Glossary in How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals booklet*.)

## Development Plan Amendments

The Development Plan may be amended to adapt to changing circumstances, changing community values, new development trends, more certainty and growth. Anyone may request an amendment to the Development Plan by submitting the proper application form and fee. City Administration may also initiate an amendment. (See *How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals booklet for more on how to get involved*.)



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## The Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw is adopted by City Council to regulate development and provide for the amenity of the municipality and the health, safety and general welfare of inhabitants in a manner consistent with the Development Plan.

### Zoning Districts

The Zoning Bylaw divides the City into zoning districts. Each zoning district includes the purpose of the district, a list of permitted land uses within the district, and a list of development standards establishing minimum and maximum requirements that must be met before development can proceed. (See *Glossary in How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals booklet*).

### Zoning Bylaw Amendments

A Zoning Bylaw Amendment refers to a change to the Zoning Bylaw text or map. Any individual(s) or City Administration may initiate a Zoning Bylaw amendment by submitting the proper application form and fee. (See *How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals booklet for more on how to get involved*.)



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View the  
Development Plan  
and Land Use Maps  
or  
Zoning Bylaw  
and Zoning Maps  
online  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca)

Copies can also be  
purchased from the  
City Clerk's Office.

## **Review of Development Plan & Zoning Bylaw**

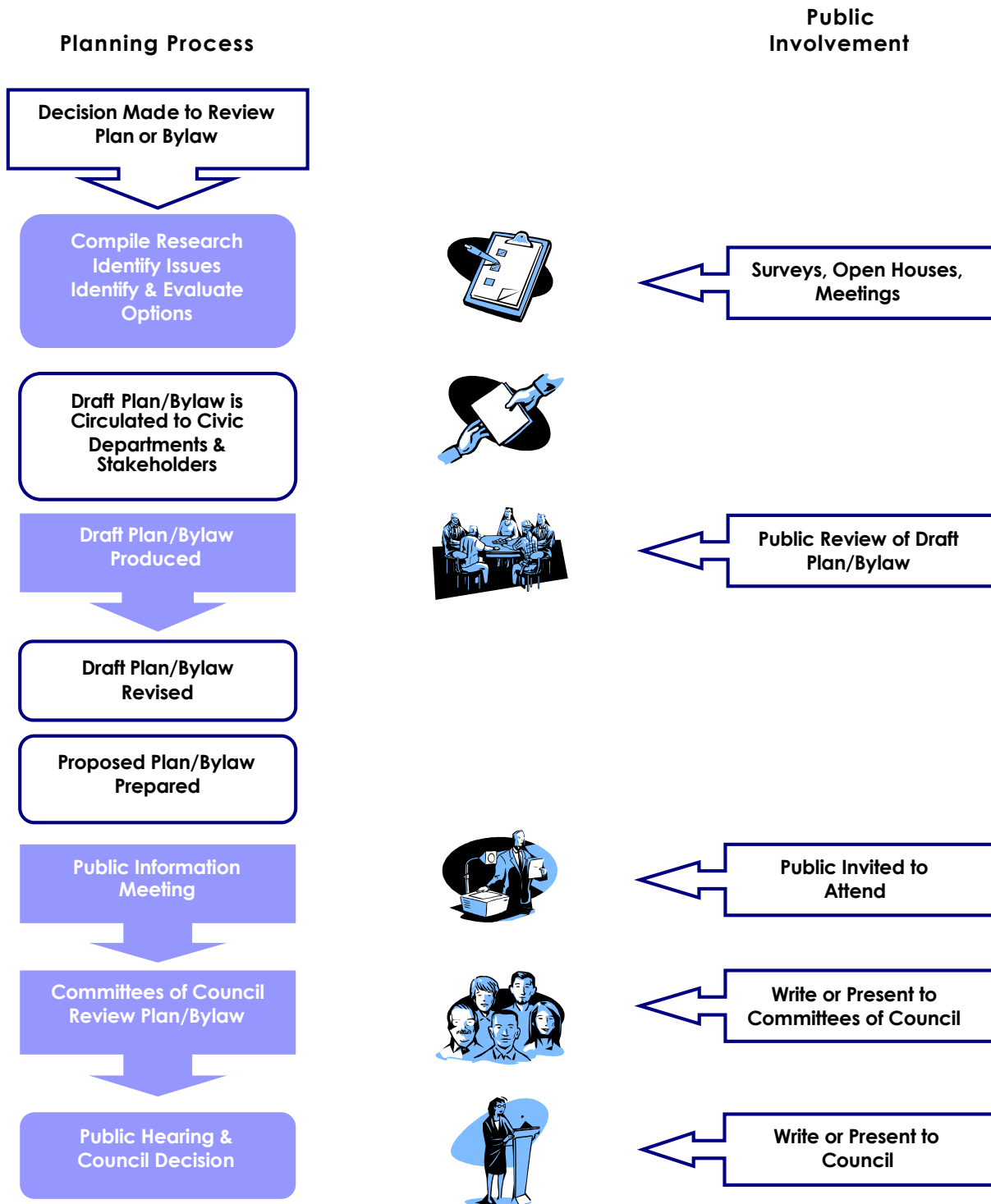
The Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw undergo a comprehensive review every 8 to 10 years. During this process, the Administration and City Council ensure that:

- the objectives and policies remain valid in view of possible changes in terms of population, employment, development patterns and market trends
- the objectives and policies are adequate for the implementation of the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan
- the objectives and policies are measured against a comprehensive set of indicators that track the year to year changes in Saskatoon's quality of life
- public consultation processes are adequate to provide an effective voice for the public and necessary information for the Administration and City Council in the decision-making process.



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## Public Involvement in Review of DEVELOPMENT PLAN and ZONING BYLAW



This flow chart is a general outline of how the public typically is involved in the comprehensive review of the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw. Each review process may vary slightly.

## Planning for the Future

### District Planning

The City of Saskatoon is surrounded by the Rural Municipality (R.M.) of Corman Park. The City and R.M. have worked together to manage land use and development in the region since 1956 when the first District Planning agreement was entered into. Known as the Saskatoon Planning District, it is an area of the R.M. approximately 2 to 6 miles from City limits. It is within this Planning District that the City and R.M. have a joint interest in managing land use and development. The Saskatoon Planning District has its own separate Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw. Periodically, the City and R.M. will agree to review the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw and will seek public input as part of the review process.

- The District Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw are reviewed approximately every 8 to 10 years.



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### Future Growth Planning

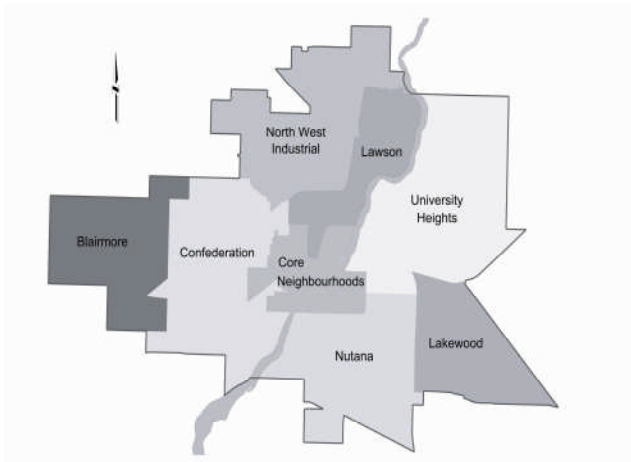
In 1999, the Future Growth Study produced a long-range plan for urban growth, up to a population threshold of approximately 400,000. Within Saskatoon, Suburban Development Areas (SDAs) serve as the basic building blocks for planning and managing growth. A typical SDA consists of approximately 10 neighbourhoods, a Suburban Centre and District Centres containing higher density residential development and mixed uses within commercial areas.

The City and R.M. have recommended that several sectors within the Planning District be developed as new, fully serviced SDAs. The proposed new SDAs will be annexed as part of the City of Saskatoon when appropriate.

**Future Growth  
Studies are reviewed  
periodically as the  
need arises – usually  
every ten years.**



### Suburban Development Areas (SDAs) 2006



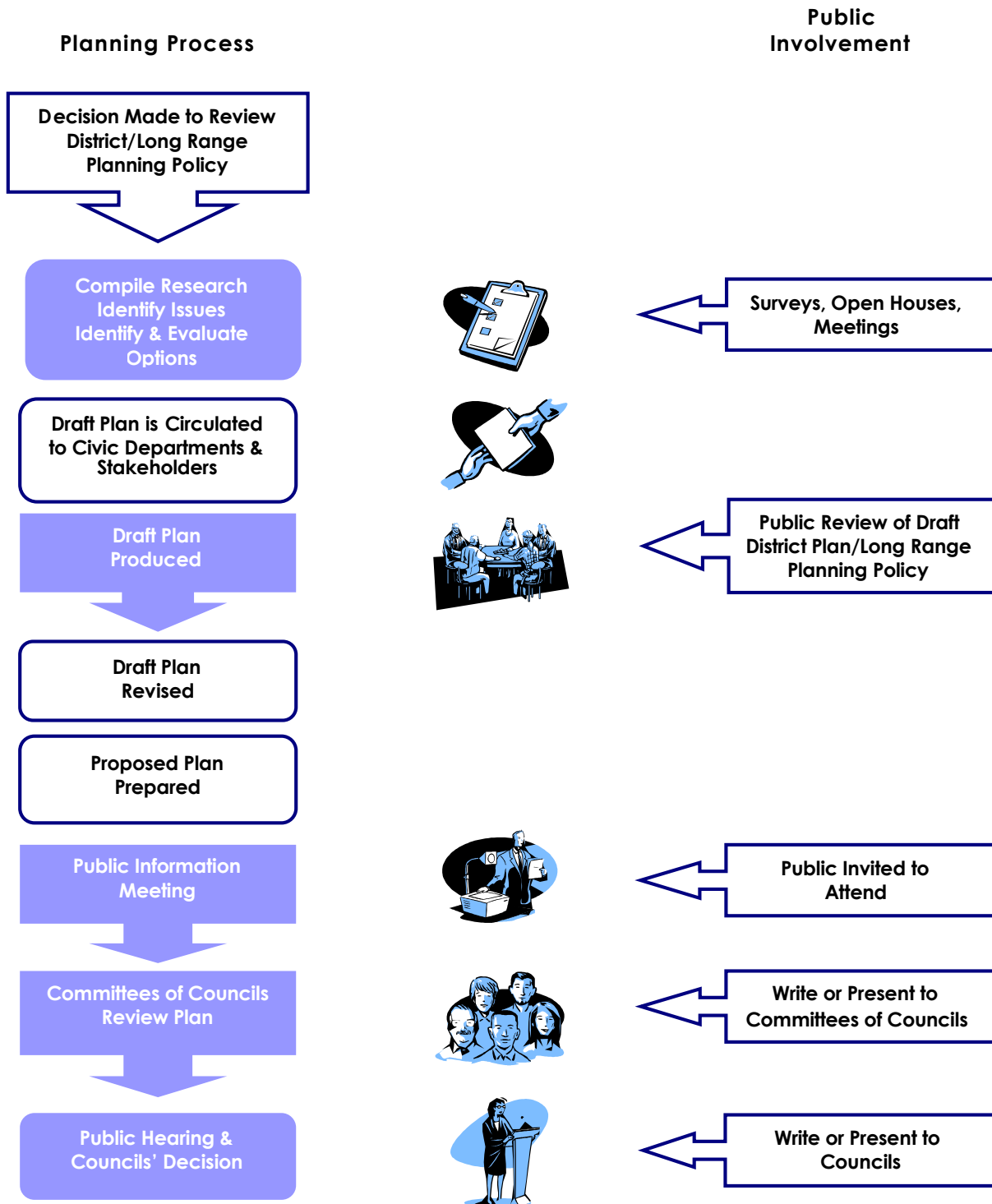
### Proposed New SDAs



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## Public Involvement in Review of DISTRICT PLANS and LONG RANGE PLANNING POLICY



This flow chart is a general outline of how the public typically is involved in the comprehensive review of District Plans and Long Range Planning Policy. Each review process may vary slightly.

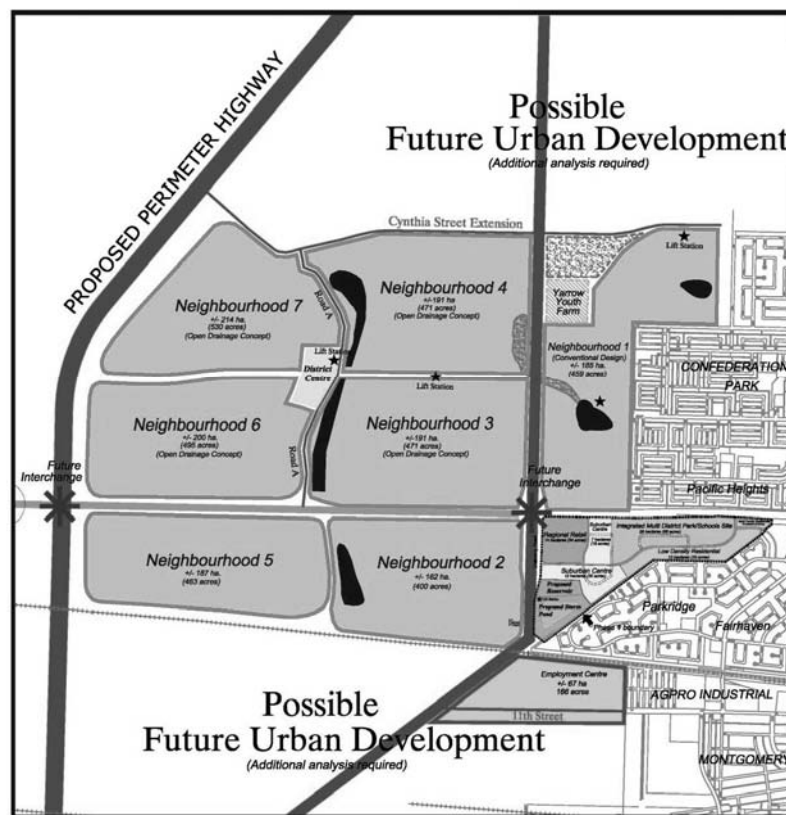
## Sector Plans

Sector plans provide the basis for more detailed planning (subdivisions, land use designations, etc.) necessary to turn undeveloped areas into new urban developments. They illustrate a development framework that usually encompasses two or more neighbourhoods or industrial areas.

Sector plans address a wide range of technical issues (transportation, servicing networks, location of schools/parks/commercial sites, density and types of uses permitted, etc.). They may also address specific issues such as airport noise or environment impact of new development.

### Sample Sector Plan

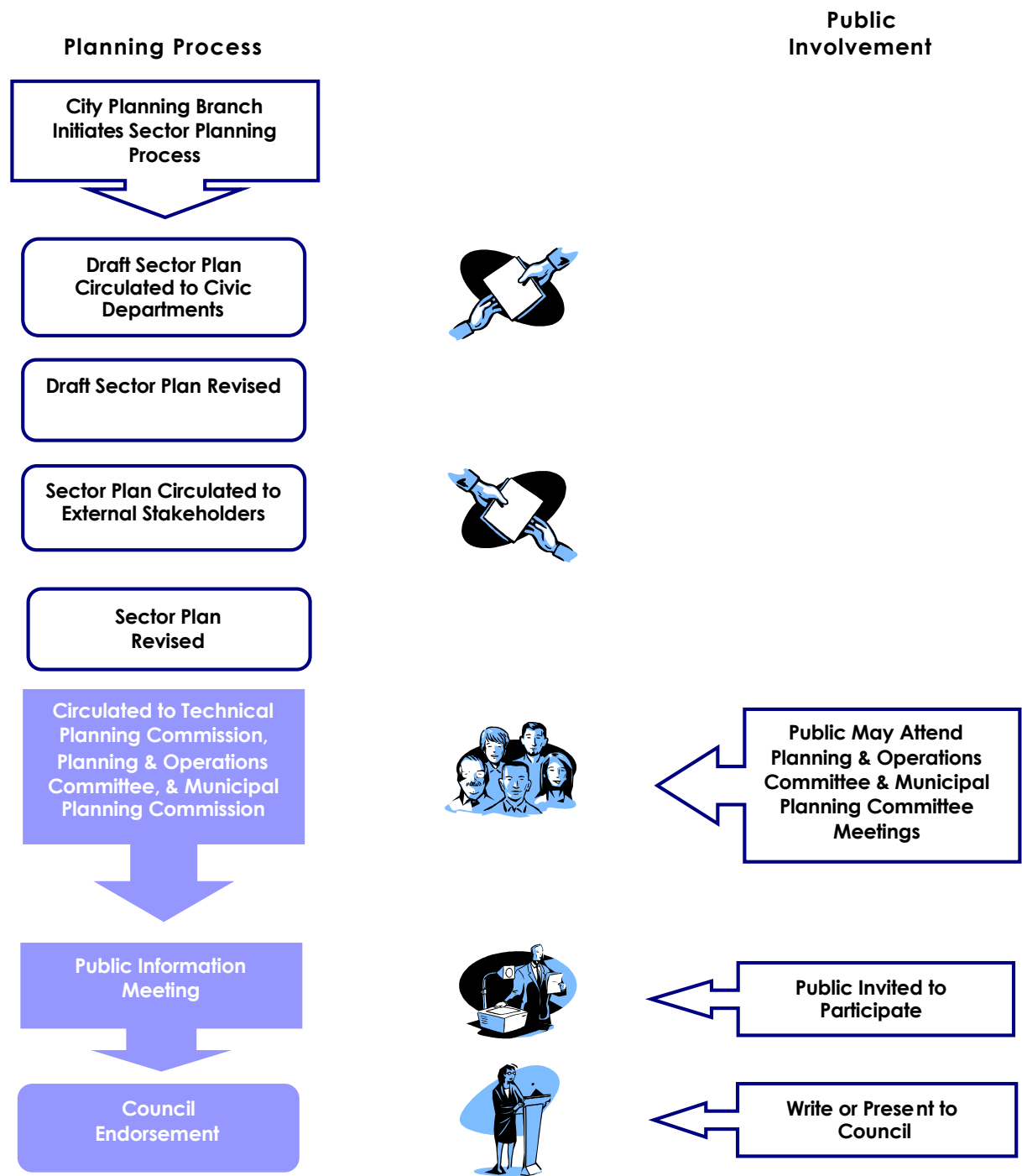
#### West Sector Concept Plan



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Public Involvement in SECTOR PLANS

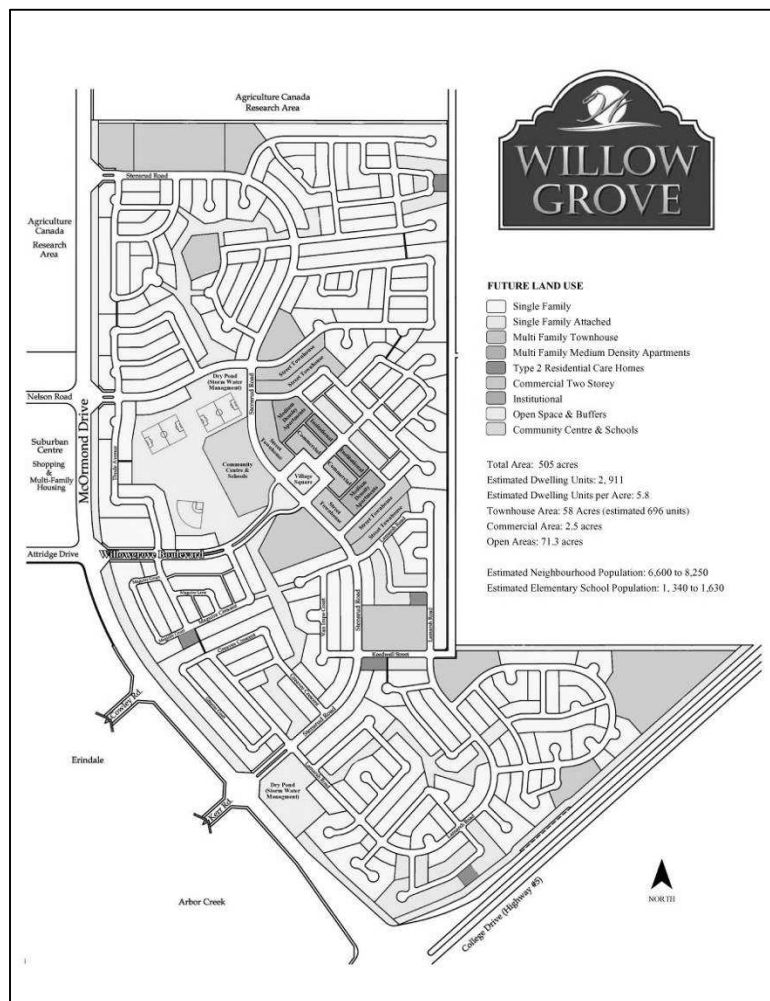




## Neighbourhood Concept Plans

A Neighbourhood Concept Plan sets the framework for development of a particular neighbourhood within established design, land use and servicing principles. Once approved in principle by City Council, it provides Council, civic staff, utility agencies, school divisions and developers a comprehensive representation of the intended plan on which to base future decisions regarding issues such as servicing, development and marketing.

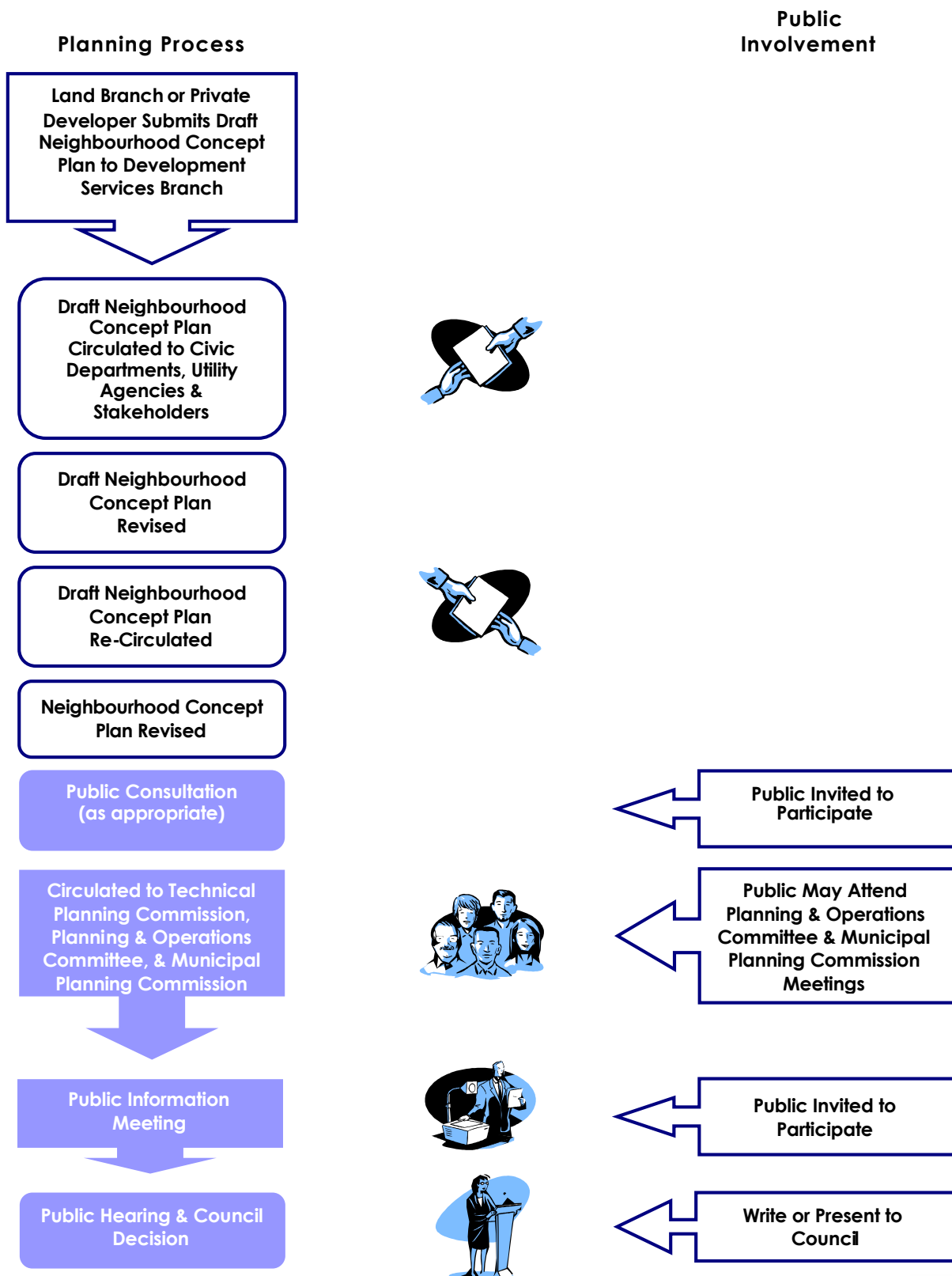
### Sample Neighbourhood Concept Plan



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[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## Public Involvement in NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCEPT PLANS



## The Downtown Plan

View the Downtown Plan at  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca)  
» Departments  
» Community Services  
» City Planning

The Saskatoon Downtown Plan is a commitment to an ongoing creative process to enhance the city's image, contribute to its social and cultural opportunities and reinforce the economic viability of the Downtown. As the centre and heart of Saskatoon and region, the Downtown will continue to provide the highest level of administrative, commercial, cultural and entertainment facilities. It will also contain the highest development densities, a strong diversity of activity and a growing residential population.

- The Downtown Plan is reviewed as needed. No formal method of public input has been determined.



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## Local Area Plans (LAPs)

Local Area Plans give residents an active role in determining the future of their community. View them online at [www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca)  
» Departments  
» Community Services  
» City Planning



One of the goals of the City's Strategic Plan is to enable community-based participation in issue identification and problem resolution. In 1997, City Council committed to achieving this goal by providing ongoing funding for a Local Area Planning

Program. Local Area Plans (LAPs) give residents, business owners and stakeholders an active role in determining the future of the community. Participants work together to identify issues, develop goals and outline strategies to ensure the long-term success of their neighbourhood.

LAPs set objectives and policies to guide development of select neighbourhoods. They are applied to areas that require extra attention in order to:

- maintain the quality, safety and viability of the area
- guide and prioritize expenditure of public funds on community improvements and infrastructure

- encourage the renewal, rehabilitation or redevelopment of private and public properties
- resolve situations where City policies do not accurately reflect area needs
- provide a basis for change to Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw.

**Local Area Plans  
are implemented  
over a 10 to 15 year  
period.**

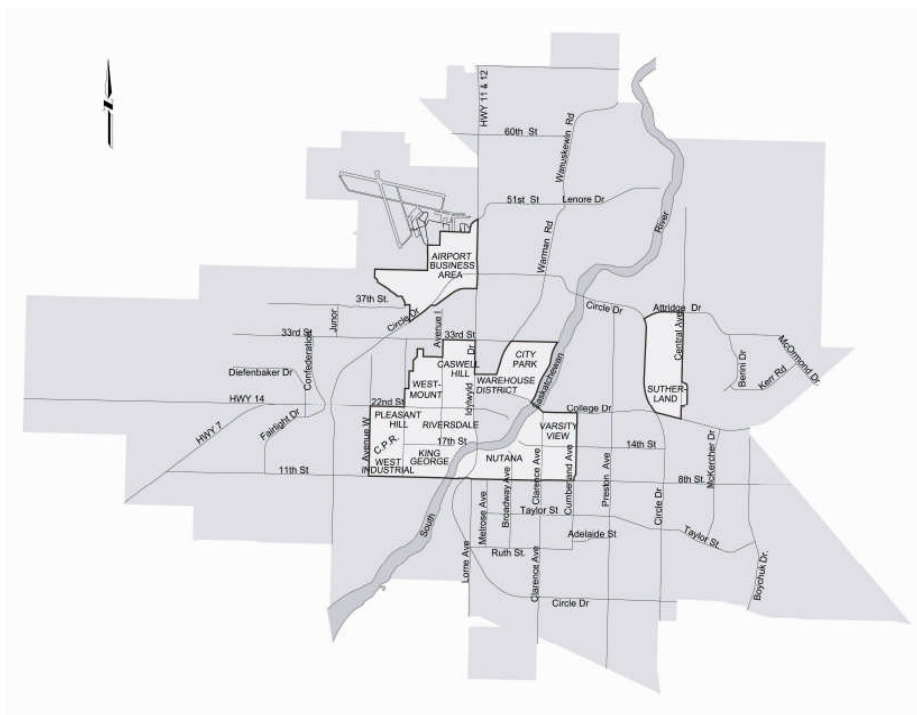
Eight neighbourhoods have completed the LAP process and now have a LAP endorsed by City Council. Twelve neighbourhoods are scheduled to receive a LAP.

#### Existing LAPs

- **Sutherland (1999)**
- **King George (2001)**
- **Nutana (2001)**
- **Caswell Hill (2001)**
- **Warehouse District (2001)**
- **Pleasant Hill (2002)**
- **Airport Industrial (2003)**
- **West Industrial (2004)**

#### In Development/Future LAPs

- **Riversdale (2005-2006)**
- **City Park**
- **Westmount**
- **Varsity View**

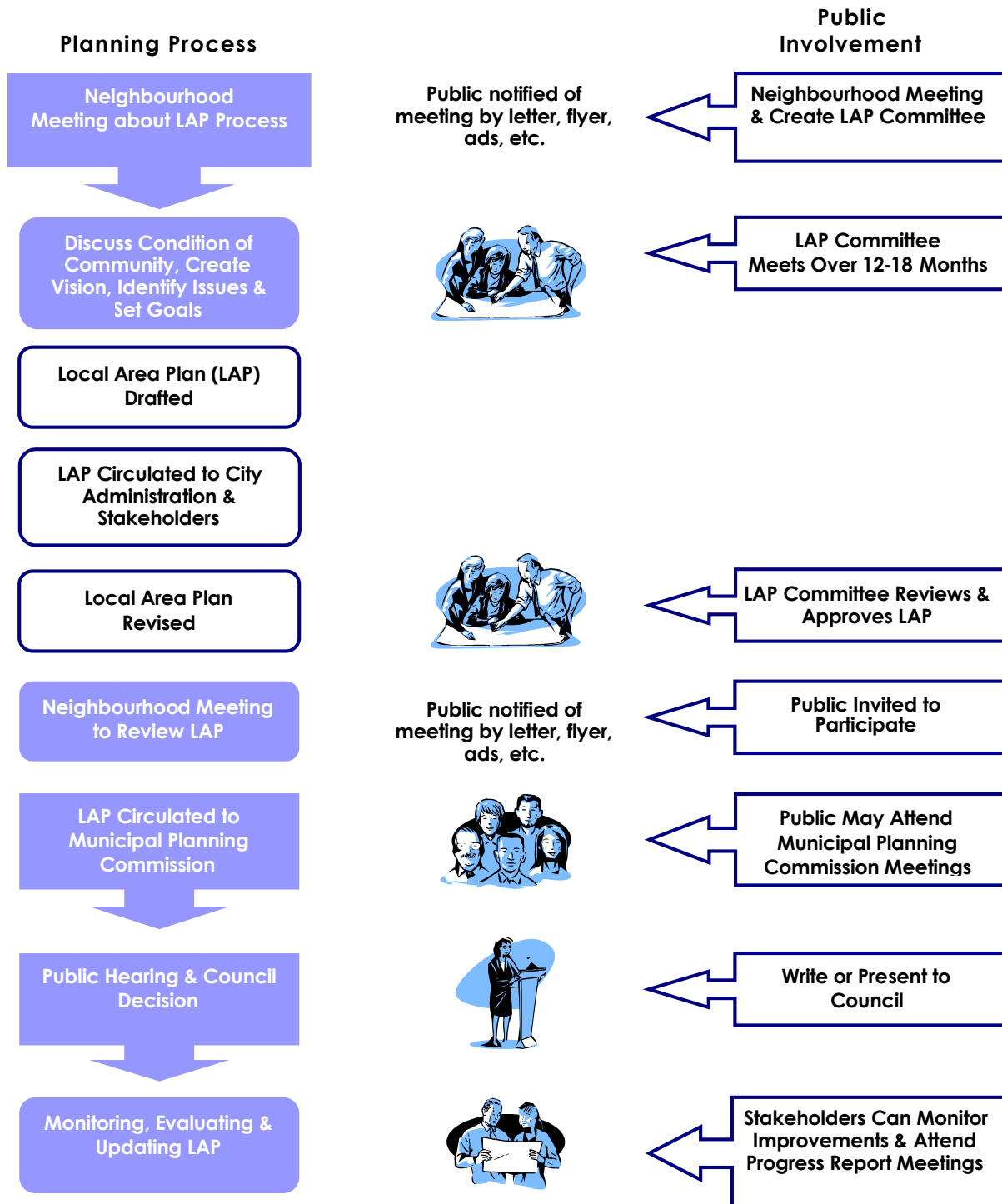


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## Public Involvement in a LOCAL AREA PLAN (LAP)



## Heritage Conservation Program



The Heritage Conservation Program reflects the City's commitment to working with the community to conserve and interpret our diverse heritage – and to do so in a planned, selective and cost feasible manner. Preserving our natural and built heritage enriches Saskatoon neighbourhoods and business districts, generates economic activity through rehabilitation efforts, and sustains long-term use of properties.

The Heritage Conservation Program provides assistance to private property owners for the conservation of buildings, natural environments, or archaeological and/or palaeontological sites. Property owners may apply for:

- inclusion on the Community Heritage Register, or
- Municipal Heritage Property Designation.

Both types of properties may qualify to receive financial assistance for rehabilitation projects, including tax exemptions based on a percentage of the project cost, partial funding of building permit fees and recognition plaques.

There is a cap on tax exemptions: \$150,000 over a 10-year period for designated properties; \$30,000 over a 10-year period for Community Heritage Register properties. Owners may make more than one application during the period, enabling rehabilitation work to be staged over the ten year period. Grants may be provided for non-governmental tax-exempt properties, based on the property tax abatement formula, up to a maximum of \$10,000 for municipally designated property and \$2,000 for property on the Community Heritage Register.

**Municipal heritage properties are protected indefinitely by bylaw; Community Heritage Register properties are protected for a fixed number of years.**



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## **The Enterprise Zone Program**

**The goal of the Enterprise Zone is to revitalize residential and business uses in core neighbourhoods.**

In May 2002, the City of Saskatoon launched the Enterprise Zone Program. The program identifies eight neighbourhoods eligible for targeted incentives such as tax abatements and building permit fee rebates in order to revitalize residential and business uses within the neighbourhoods. The Zone includes the neighbourhoods of Caswell Hill, Kelsey, King George, Mayfair, Pleasant Hill, Riversdale, Westmount and West Industrial. City Council has implemented the Enterprise Zone for a limited time until funding is depleted.

Existing or proposed residential properties, retail stores, warehouses, manufacturing facilities, public recreation facilities, tourism and cultural facilities, and transportation facilities are eligible for the available incentives and programs. These include:

- Building and Plumbing Permit Fee Rebates (including Residential Permits)
- Property Tax Abatements
- Off-site Development Charges (excluding 1 and 2 unit dwellings)
- Relocation Assistance/Land Swap Exchange
- Rebate Environmental Screening Charges (all residential properties)

Incentives offered to accommodate commercial proposals or projects at specific locations include:

- Land Assembly to create suitable sites for development (City-owned sites only)
- Development Plan Amendment, Zoning Bylaw Amendment, Discretionary Use and Subdivision Fee Rebates



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## **Affordable Housing Program**



Housing is a fundamental determinant of a community's health and quality of life. When housing needs are not met, the community feels the impact in increased social and economic costs. The role of the City in meeting housing needs is primarily land development and regulatory activities. It assists groups in the development of appropriate housing solutions and encourages the delivery of a wider

variety of housing products at all market levels.

The goal is to promote social inclusion and maximize the stability of families and neighbourhoods. When families have stability, they can make longer-term commitments to jobs, education and community. Unaffordable housing, poor housing conditions and low-vacancy rates can all impact stability. Some of the tools used to promote family and neighbourhood stability include:

- increasing both the affordability of housing and the range of choices available in all neighbourhoods
- providing better supports to families in their homes
- maximizing opportunities for families to own their own homes.



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## **Urban Design Program**

Urban Design is a creative process that integrates aesthetic concerns with the functional requirements of public and private developments. Considerations include neighbourhood identity; pedestrian safety, comfort and convenience; traffic flow, co-ordination between architecture and open spaces; urban streetscape; aesthetic improvements and reduction of visual clutter and noise; adequacy of utilities and services; and streetscape amenities such as benches, garbage receptacles and lighting.



**Urban design can strengthen the economic base of a community and contribute to its social and cultural enrichment.**

The City's Urban Design program was established in 1990 through the creation of the Streetscape Reserve and the Urban Design Committee. Since the Reserve receives 43% of parking meter revenue, the focus of the Urban Design Committee is the three core Business Improvement Districts where most parking meters are located.

The Urban Design Committee is comprised of representatives from civic branches as well as the Downtown, Broadway and Riversdale Business Improvement Districts, and the Meewasin Valley Authority. Its mandate is to identify urban design objectives and implement urban design projects and programs affecting public and private open space and public right of ways. It also reviews projects impacting the public realm.

The Urban Design Section is responsible for carrying out the programs and projects of the Urban Design Committee. These include:

- Major projects involving Streetscape Masterplan design and construction
  - Small projects partnering with BIDs, private partners and civic branches and involving design, construction and project management
- Annual Programs:
- Seasonal Planters
  - Façade Grant Program
  - Banner Program
  - Heritage Awareness Program
  - Parking Lot Screen Program
  - Temporary Sculpture and Public Art Program

The Urban Design is involved in the Urban Design of River Landing and implementation of the Entrance Sign program throughout the city. It also provides design advice to other civic departments and branches.



Land Branch: (306) 975-3278

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## **Urban Reserves**

An Urban Reserve is land that has received official Indian Reserve status from the Federal Government and is located within urban municipal boundaries. Indian Reserve land is owned by the Crown and held-in-trust for the use and benefit of a First Nation, under terms set out in the Indian Act of 1876.

Since the 1980s, the City of Saskatoon has partnered with a number of First Nations in the groundbreaking creation of Urban Reserves. These reserves provide unique economic development opportunities and benefit for both First Nations and the City. The City Planning Branch assists First Nations in meeting the Federal Government's requirements, such as land use and municipal servicing agreements between the City and First Nation. It also maintains a productive partnership through open lines of communication.



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## **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a collaborative, multi-faceted approach to reducing opportunities for crime, improving community perceptions of safety and strengthening community bonds. As one of the tools used by the City Planning Branch, CPTED emphasizes the relationship between the immediate physical environment and the social behaviours related to crime. CPTED principles are used when reviewing new developments (sector plans, neighbourhood concept plans, parks and individuals sites), and CPTED strategies are used in the implementation of recommendations in local area plans.



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## Other Planning Tools

### The City as Land Developer

**The Land Bank program is self-sustaining and has no negative impact on the City's Mill Rate.**

Unlike most North American cities, the City of Saskatoon is in the land development business. Through the Land Bank program, the City functions as a fiscally responsible land developer for City-owned land. It is subject to the same regulatory mechanisms as the private sector. The Land Bank program ensures suitable, serviced lots are available at reasonable and relatively stable prices. This benefits the City in two distinct ways. First, it provides net proceeds from land sales to fund civic programs. Second, it has the ability to directly influence the timing, pace and direction of City growth.

The City of Saskatoon sells residential lots to both individuals and eligible contractors. Sales to individuals are for construction of their own personal, principal residence. An individual may purchase a lot from the City only every three years. Sales to contractors are only to those who meet certain eligibility criteria; information on contractor eligibility criteria is available from the Land Branch. Residential lots are sold throughout the year as servicing is completed. When lots are ready for sale, advertisements are placed in the local newspaper setting out the method, terms and time of sale.

The Land Development Section within the Land Branch is responsible for land assembly, concept plans, subdivision, servicing, pricing and marketing of residential lots and institutional, commercial and industrial parcels. It analyzes future growth and market conditions to create a strategy for the acquisition, design, subdivision, servicing and sale of lots and parcels.



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### New Neighbourhood Development Process

The process for developing a new neighbourhood is the same whether undertaken by the Land Branch or a private developer. It includes the following:

- 1. Amend Development Plan** – The Development Plan must be amended to allow City expansion to occur. The Development Plan is administered by the City Planning Branch.

2. **Sector Plan** – City Planning Branch creates a sector plan to provide a development framework for two or more neighbourhoods or industrial areas.
3. **Identify Development Constraints & Opportunities** – Land Branch or private developer conducts research to ensure the land can be economically developed, and to identify opportunities and constraints (e.g. site topography, environmental impact, heritage opportunities, traffic impact analysis, water and sewer capabilities, multi-level policy and regulations).
4. **Neighbourhood Concept Plan** – Land Branch or private developer creates a development concept for a new full-serviced neighbourhood, which is submitted to Development Services Branch for approval.
5. **Subdivision Approvals** – Approval of the Neighbourhood Concept Plan by Development Services Branch opens the way for subdivision approvals. Subdivisions must conform to the concept plan.
6. **Development Plan & Zoning Bylaw Amendments** – Amendments by City Planning Branch and Development Services Branch clear the way for the first phase of development. Land use designations for land parcels are created in the Development Plan, zoning designations for particular parcels in the Zoning Bylaw.
7. **Phased Development** – Neighbourhood is subdivided, servicing is completed and lots and parcels are sold in phases. Depending on market factors, it can take 10 to 15 years to build a neighbourhood.
8. **Selling Lots**
  - Land Branch and developers pay Off-Site Levies to City of Saskatoon for City infrastructure outside neighbourhood boundaries. Levies include those things required to bring services to new development and things which the new development has an impact on.
  - Land Branch and some private developers pay Direct Service Levies to the City to have Infrastructure Services Department contract and pay for on-site services within neighbourhood boundaries.
  - Land Branch offers lots for sale using a lot draw process. Remaining lots are added to inventory and made available on first-come, first-serve basis. Individuals building homes and eligible contractors may purchase lots.
  - It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that, before they purchase a property, they are aware of what the future holds for the area. Information is available through Development Services Branch and City Planning Branch.

- Development Officer reviews and approves permitted uses through issuance of Development Permit. Tax dollars are not used to build a new neighbourhood – costs are built-in to lot prices.



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[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Land Branch

City Planning Branch: (306) 975-2645

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » City Planning

Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## **Mapping, GIS Products & Data Collection**

The Research and Information Resource Centre provides standardized mapping and geographical information services to the Department, the City and the public. Information is developed from a variety of local, provincial and national sources. These include:

- data availability for planning, corporate and public analysis (e.g. population projections, neighbourhood profiles, etc.)
- standardized mapping and geographical information system (GIS) products.

Service charges for custom requests are based on industry standard rates. A cost estimate is provided prior to fulfilling the order. Map data is free; processing time, media used, plotting charges and shipping & handling are billed accordingly.



City Planning Branch: (306) 975-2645

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » City Planning

## **Planning Skills Training Program**

The Planning Skills Training Program offers a series of free half-day and evening courses throughout the year. It is for community association volunteers as well as members of the public interested in developing skills and knowledge in city planning and development. Through the program, participants learn about:

- planning in Saskatoon and practical applications of the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw

Custom maps may be ordered subject to availability of data and staff resources.

- amendments to the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw, and how to review and provide comments on land use development proposals
- interacting with City Council and the public hearing procedure, including tips on how to make concise and effective presentations to City Council relating to the City planning and development process
- other planning procedures, initiatives and policies.



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[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » City Planning



## Approvals, Permits & Licenses

Implementation planning is a means of applying the City's Development Plan, Zoning Bylaw, Local Area Plans and other policies and regulations (National Building Code, Building Bylaw, etc.). It happens in response to a specific application by or on behalf of a property owner, business owner or the City of Saskatoon.

### Development Permits

A Development permit is a document that authorizes a development in accordance with requirements of the Zoning Bylaw.

### Application Process

1. **Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to Development Services Branch and/or Building Standards Branch as part of building/sign permit application.
2. **Development Services Branch Review** – City Development Officer reviews application to ensure conformance with Zoning Bylaw, Development Plan and other applicable policies and regulations.
3. **Development Permit** – Inspection by a Development Officer may be conducted upon completion to ensure compliance with the permit. All information on the application must be accurately demonstrated.

Find out more about  
approvals, permits &  
licenses at  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca)  
» Departments  
» Community  
Services  
» Development  
Services



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

### Discretionary Use Approvals

Discretionary uses of land and buildings are permitted at the sole discretion of City Council. Discretionary uses are specifically listed in the zoning districts (e.g. bed & breakfast in residential zoning district). City Council may deny, approve or approve with conditions an application following a thorough public notification process. A development permit for the establishment or expansion of an existing discretionary use may only be issued following Council's approval of the proposed use. (See *How to Review & Comment on Planning Proposals* booklet for more details on the process.)

## **Minor Variances**

A minor variance is a variation not exceeding 10% of Zoning Bylaw requirements for (a) minimum required distance of a building from lot line, or (b) minimum required distance of a building to any other building on the lot. Minor variances can only be granted on applications for 1 and 2 unit dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, mobile homes and accessory buildings to such developments. They are not granted for a discretionary use.

### **Application Process**

- 1. Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to Development Services Branch together with required application fee and supporting materials.
- 2. Development Services Branch Review** – City Development Officer may approve the minor variance, approve the minor variance but impose terms and conditions, or refuse the minor variance.
- 3. Decision** – The applicant and property owners of adjacent properties are notified in writing once a decision is rendered. If assessed owner of adjacent property objects to the variance prior to the effective date (23 days from date of notice if delivered by registered mail; 20 days if delivered by personal service), approval is revoked.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## **Sign Permits**

The City regulates, through the Zoning Bylaw, the use of all forms of signs in Saskatoon. The goal is to ensure that the use and placement of signs does not create a hazard for pedestrians or motorists, that signs are well maintained and that the number of signs does not affect the attractiveness of the city.

### **Application Process**

- 1. Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to Development Services Branch together with the required application fee and a quote for the value of the sign.
- 2. Development Services Branch Review** – Development Services Branch reviews application to ensure conformance with Zoning Bylaw and other applicable

policies and regulations. The Branch may refer applications to other civic departments and government agencies for comment.

- 3. Sign Permit** – Upon issuance of the Sign Permit, the applicant may proceed with installation. An inspection by a Development Officer is conducted upon completion to ensure compliance with the permit. All information recorded on the application form must be demonstrated accurately.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## **Subdivision of Land**

The Subdivision Regulations Bylaw controls the subdivision of land in Saskatoon. Subdivision is the process used to divide land into smaller parcels in order to legally register separate ownership titles with the provincial Information Services Corporation. Subdivision occurs in accordance with the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaw.

### **Application Process**

- 1. Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to Development Services Branch together with required application fee and supporting materials.
- 2. Development Services Branch Review** – Development Services Branch reviews application to ensure conformance with Subdivision Regulations, Development Plan, Zoning Bylaw and other applicable policies and regulations. The Branch may refer applications to other civic departments and government agencies for comment. A report containing recommendations, concerns or conditions of approval is submitted to the Technical Planning Commission (TPC) for endorsement.

An application may require the Dedication of Lands for Public Use pursuant to Section 189 of The Planning and Development Act, at a rate of 10% of the land being subdivided for Residential purposes and 5% of the land being subdivided for Industrial and Commercial purposes. At the Approving Authority's (City) discretion, money-in-lieu of the dedication requirement may be required.

- 3. Technical Planning Commission (TPC) Review** – The TPC either recommends approval or denial of the application. If approved, a Certificate of Approval is issued to the applicant provided conditions of approval have been satisfied

(i.e. servicing agreement, easement agreements). If denied, a report is sent to City Council informing them of the decision.

- 4. Certificate of Approval** – Upon issuance of the Certificate of Approval, applicant may submit a Plan of Survey to the Controller of Surveys for approval to register the Plan of Survey, with appropriate approval fee.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## **Business Licenses**

Saskatoon's Business License Bylaw ensures that businesses comply with land use and building regulations, while helping to gather business information and improve planning decisions. In the bylaw, "business" means any commercial, merchandising or industrial activity or undertaking; carrying on of a profession, trade, occupation, calling or employment; or activity providing goods or services.

### **Home Based Businesses**

The Zoning Bylaw allows occupants of dwellings to conduct certain businesses from their homes. A home based business is an accessory use to a residence that is:

- secondary and incidental to the primary use as a residence, and
- does not change the residential character of the building or site.

Standards for home based businesses are intended to balance a quiet, safe and aesthetic residential environment with the aspirations of home based business entrepreneurs.

### **Application Process**

- 1. Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to the Development Services Branch together with the required application fee and certificate of Business Name Registration (if available).
- 2. Development Services Branch Review** – Development Services Branch reviews application for compliance with Zoning Bylaw and other applicable policies and regulations.
- 3. Business License** – If approved, applicant receives written confirmation by mail along with a copy of the Business License.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
www.saskatoon.ca ► Departments ► Community Services ► Development Services

## **Building & Plumbing Permits**

New construction standards make it more cost effective for owners to upgrade existing suites.



The Building Standards Branch issues building and plumbing permits. It also administers inspection programs related to regulations contained in the Building Bylaw, Swimming Pool Bylaw, Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act, National Building Code and Plumbing and Drainage Regulations.

**Building Permits** are required when a new building is being built, when an existing building is being added onto or otherwise altered, and when the occupancy/use of a building is being changed. Owners or their agents (architect, engineer or contractor) can apply for the permit. During construction, the City Building Inspector ensures requirements related to structural sufficiency, life safety, health safety and fire safety are met.

**Plumbing Permits** are required when a new plumbing and drainage system is being installed and when an existing plumbing and drainage system is being added onto or otherwise altered. Certified plumbing contractors must apply for the permit. During construction, the City Plumbing Inspector ensures all plumbing requirements are met.



Building Standards: (306) 975-2645  
www.saskatoon.ca ► Departments ► Community Services ► Building Standards

## **Legalizing Existing Suites**

In 1999, the City's Zoning Bylaw was modified to provide owners with a greater opportunity to legalize suites throughout Saskatoon. It quickly became apparent, however, that most existing suites in the City would not meet requirements of the National Building Code, and the cost to upgrade would be prohibitive. In seeking a solution, the City of Saskatoon, in consultation with the community, adopted new occupancy standards for existing suites that focus on life, health and safety issues.

- In order to legalize an existing suite under relaxed occupancy standards, the suite must have been developed and occupied prior to January 1, 1999. A letter of verification regarding the age of the suite is required. Suites built after January 1, 1999 must fully comply with the National Building Code.

## Application Process

1. **Submission of Application, Complaint or Referral** – Application (along with fee and appropriate supporting materials), complaint or referral is submitted to Development Services Branch.
2. **Development Services Branch Review** – The Branch verifies the permitted use for the property under the Zoning Bylaw, reviews site records and performs an initial on-site inspection.
3. **Advice to Property Owner** – Owner is advised of any non-complying situations and informed of what needs to be done to (a) legalize the suite (e.g. zoning requirements, building and plumbing matters) or (b) remove the suite. If the suite is not upgraded or removed, Development Services Branch is required to take appropriate action.
4. **Property Owners Choices:**
  - Remove Suite** – Development Services Branch follows-up to ensure all remedial work is completed.

**Alternate Legal Use** – the Branch confirms all necessary work and whether or not a building and/or plumbing permit is required.

**Upgrade to Legal Suite** – owner must supply plans and apply for an Occupancy Permit from the Development Services Branch. A Building Permit from the Building Standards Branch may also be required. When all work is satisfactorily completed, Development Services Branch then issues an unqualified Occupancy Permit or qualified Occupancy Permit if an Advisory of Deficiencies has been issued.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services



## Condominium Approvals

Property owners may apply to the City for condominium status of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings. City approval is required to provide condominium status to a property, pursuant to The Condominium Property Act administered by the Province of Saskatchewan.

### Application Process

- 1. Submission of Application for a Condominium Registration** – Application is submitted to Development Services Branch together with required application fee and supporting materials.
- 2. Development Services Branch Review** – Development Services Branch reviews application for conformance with the Condominium Property Act, City of Saskatoon Policy for Condominium Approvals, Zoning Bylaw and other applicable policies and regulations. The Branch may refer applications to other civic departments and government agencies for comment.
- 3. Letter of Approval** – If approved, Manager of Development Services Branch and City Clerk sign the plans. Applicant is given a Letter of Approval with the signed plans, which must be submitted for registration to the provincial Information Services Corporation.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## Radio Communication Tower Approvals

The City of Saskatoon does not have approval authority over tower applications.

In situations where applicants wish to locate a radio communication tower in a residential area or where the base of a radio communication tower is 200 metres or less from a residential area, the Federal Government requires a public consultation process. The City of Saskatoon plays an advisory role in the review process and facilitates the public consultation process involving the affected neighbours and community association. A detailed report of this consultation is forwarded by the City to Industry Canada, which makes the final decision.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## Appeals & Complaints

### Development Appeals

An individual has the right to appeal to the Development Appeals Board when:

- a Development Officer is alleged to have misapplied the Zoning Bylaw in issuing a development permit
- a Development Officer refuses to issue a development permit because it would contravene the Zoning Bylaw
- a minor variance approval is revoked, refused or approved with terms and conditions
- a Development Officer issues an Order to Remedy Contravention
- an application for a subdivision has been denied
- conditions have been included on a Discretionary Use approval.

### Application Process

1. **Submission of Application** – Application is submitted to Secretary of the Development Appeals Board, City Clerk's Office, together with required application fee, written request or completed Notice of Appeal and appropriate plans, maps and drawings.
2. **Development Appeals Board Decision** – A hearing at a Development Appeals Board meeting is held within 30 days of receipt of a Development Appeal Application. Notice is given to the property owner and assessed owners of neighbouring properties within a radius of 75 metres.

The Board issues its decision in writing within 30 days of conclusion of the hearing. Its decision does not take effect until 30 days from the date of Record of Decision in order to allow further appeals to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board.

- 3. Decision Appeals** – The provincial Minister of Government Relations, Council, applicant or other person may appeal to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board within 20 days of the date of notification of the Development Appeals Board's Record of Decision.



City Clerk's Office: (306) 975-3240  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » City Council » City Clerk's Office

## **Land Use Complaints**

Individuals or businesses sometimes, by design or lack of knowledge, engage in activities contrary to the Zoning Bylaw. If an individual thinks a development is contrary to standards outlined in the Zoning Bylaw or is an illegal activity (e.g. illegal basement suite), you have the right to make a land use complaint to the Development Services Branch.

### **Complaint Process**

- 1. Submission of Complaint** – Information on the alleged violation is submitted to Development Services Branch along with complainant's name, address and telephone number, and information regarding the subject property. The complainant will be asked if they want to be kept informed of the complaint file.
- 2. Development Services Branch Site Inspection** – Once a valid complaint is received, a site inspection will occur to confirm the deficiency or violation. If no violation is found, the file is closed. If a violation is confirmed, the property owner is advised of what must be done to resolve the violation.

If the property owner complies with the recommendations and a site inspection confirms no further violations, the file is closed.

If the property owner does not comply, Development Services Branch will proceed with enforcement actions. The City works to resolve such issues in a timely manner; however, it may take several months to completely resolve issues, especially if legal action is required.



Development Services Branch: (306) 975-2645  
[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca) » Departments » Community Services » Development Services

## Notes

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*City of*  
**Saskatoon**

*Community Engagement*

City Planning Branch  
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(look under 'c' for City Planning - Planning Education Program)