

planning + design

A CITY OF SASKATOON SEMI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION FROM PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

SPRING 2022



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Message from the Director

The Planning and Development Department is responsible for a variety of land use planning and policy matters, as you can see in most issues of Planning + Design. Engagement and consultation vary depending on what activity is occurring. Over the years, we have seen that higher level policy items or long range planning work gets less attention and less input from residents and stakeholders, while development applications get more interest and attention, since these issues more directly impact people’s day to day lives.

Yet, it is issues at the policy level where we have the opportunity for broad public engagement and more potential for input to shape outcomes. We used this type of engagement during the development of projects like the Growth Plan to Half a Million, which has now become part of the policies in the Official Community Plan and in the work launched this year on the College Corridor Plan.

This approach is very different than the opportunities available for public input on various development applications, which can include everything from a development permit to a subdivision, rezoning or land use amendment, or discretionary use application. These things are applicant driven. Decision making authority rests with City Council or is delegated to civic staff. In these cases, the Planning and Development Department undertakes to inform and consult on the applications, in line with the legal process required.

This means we can hear concerns and issues, and work to address those concerns directly associated with the application.

As Planners, and as residents ourselves, we know people often have concerns when a new development is announced near them, and it is understandable that people want to know and have a say in what happens. At the same time, there are limits to public involvement in planning, because we have to abide by property rights and the legal processes associated with land use and development practices.

We recognize that more can be done to help inform, share information and hear concerns as we work to improve, in a meaningful way, the conversations we have with residents. Many of our current projects include more comprehensive engagement and communication strategies. We’ll also be focusing on making additional changes in our operating programs to better share information, ask for feedback and confirm decisions. I fully expect that we’ll continue to find areas to improve as the expectations of Saskatoon residents evolve. It will be an ongoing but worthwhile challenge!

Lesley Anderson, RPP MCIP
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This will be the final edition of Planning + Design. We thank you for your interest in our publication. Information regarding the City of Saskatoon’s planning projects can be found at saskatoon.ca/planning. Also note, no issue was released during the Fall/Winter 2021 time period.

PLANNING PROJECT SERVICES

Bus Rapid Transit Pilot Station – Testing the Fundamentals

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A key feature of the approved Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system is an upgraded transit station that will offer improved comfort, safety, accessibility, access to information and improved wayfinding for BRT customers.

To test the physical components of the BRT platforms, a prototype Pilot Station is being built at the Civic Operations Centre on Valley Road (reference photo to the right). The first part of the station is now complete, including a 36-metre-long by four-metre-wide concrete pad with a drainage channel to divert water off the pad, electrical conduit to provide power to the transit shelter, and yellow tactile strip along the entire concrete curb to warn people of the edge. Paving stones and a tree well for future tree planting were also installed.

Construction on the second part of the Pilot Station, including building the transit shelter and real-time information display, will begin soon. Once complete, the Pilot Station will be evaluated by a technical team to ensure the components function well and withstand wear and tear. The evaluation may result in modifications to the final design of the remaining BRT stations, ensuring the platforms will serve Saskatoon for years to come. A rendering of a future BRT station on Broadway Ave. is shown below.





Photo credit: @ShelterBrewing (Instagram)

COMMUNITY STANDARDS

Outdoor Patio Update

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To activate public spaces, the City of Saskatoon allows restaurants to provide two types of outdoor dining experiences in the public right-of-way: sidewalk cafes and parking patios. Sidewalk cafes have the seating and pedestrian path on the sidewalk, while parking patios use a platform deck or boardwalk in the parking stall to accommodate patrons and pedestrians.

Businesses must have a valid Commercial Business License in order to obtain a Sidewalk Cafe or Parking Patio license. The license ensures outdoor dining areas take into consideration things such as urban design and pedestrian and traffic safety.

The sidewalk cafe and parking program has seen an increase in popularity in recent years, and uptake in 2020 and 2021 set new records. This is likely due to regulatory relaxations, public health restrictions that reduced indoor dining capacity and increased consumer demand for programmed outdoor space.

To help support businesses during the pandemic, City Council allowed businesses to put seating or a walkway directly on the asphalt, waived parking patio fees for 2020-2021 and allowed sidewalk cafes and parking patios to be installed all year, provided they were used periodically.

In the summer of 2021, 21 sidewalk cafes and 12 parking patios enhanced streetscapes and created opportunities for residents to enjoy the beautiful outdoor public spaces Saskatoon has to offer. Given the success of the program, City Council has approved year-round operation of sidewalk cafes and parking patios. This will allow operators to accommodate customers outside earlier in the spring and later into the fall. With outdoor dining infrastructure in place, businesses and patrons can also take advantage of warm weather when it occurs.

Year	Sidewalk Cafes	Parking Patios
2021	21	12
2020	11	8
2019	16	4
2018	20	4

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Bus Stop Blues Campaign

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In 2017, the City of Saskatoon launched the Bus Stop Blues campaign to ask Saskatoon residents to nominate bus stops experiencing the “blues.” The City uses this feedback to methodically plan to improve or replace the nominated bus stops, providing residents with a well-kept, sheltered area to get on and off buses.

Since Local Area Plan consultations may also identify transit stops needing upgrades, Saskatoon Transit and the Neighbourhood Planning Section work together to implement Transit improvements whenever possible. In 2021, this collaboration led to implementation of two Local Area Plan recommendations—installation of Transit shelters with interior benches in Meadowgreen and Montgomery Place.

A new transit shelter for southbound riders was installed in front of McAskill Manor on Avenue W South and 20th Street West, in consultation with the Saskatchewan Housing Authority. The photos show the original bus stop (top), the same stop with bushes cleared in preparation for the shelter (middle) and the completed bus shelter with interior bench (bottom).

Transit users in Montgomery Place are enjoying the new transit shelter installed in the fall of 2021 on Lancaster Boulevard at Cypress Gardens Apartments. In consultation with the property owner, Broadstreet Properties, the original bus stop area (top photo) was cleared and a concrete pad poured (middle photo). The was followed by installation of the new bus shelter (bottom photo).

Over the last four years, the Bus Stop Blues campaign has led to the installation of more than 50 new or updated transit shelters around the city. Residents are encouraged to contact Saskatoon Transit via Twitter or Facebook with bus stop blues. Use the hashtag #BusStopBluesYXE to submit a photo, location and reason your bus stop needs improvement.



COMMUNITY STANDARDS

Cannabis Businesses Update

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When the federal *Cannabis Act* came into force in October 2018, Canada became the second country to legalize the cultivation, sale and consumption of recreational cannabis. As with other sectors, distinct responsibilities were identified for each level of government regarding the regulation and enforcement of the legalized cannabis industry, with the federal government responsible for production and cultivation and the provincial government responsible for retail sales.

In Saskatchewan, land use regulations for production facilities and retail stores are addressed at the municipal level. This includes consideration of the impact on adjacent land uses, particularly more sensitive land use such as schools and parks, as well as regulation to prevent stores from concentrating in a single area.

In June 2018, City Council adopted the Cannabis Business License Bylaw. The bylaw outlines the business license requirements for all cannabis related businesses, as well as amendments to the Zoning Bylaw to regulate development standards and the zoning district where cannabis related businesses would be permitted.

In advance of federal legalization, the Government of Saskatchewan implemented a restriction on the number of cannabis retail stores that could be licensed in each municipality, with a maximum of seven stores permitted in Saskatoon. A lottery was held to award the right to apply for a license to prospective business owners wishing to open a store. Initially, six cannabis retail stores were licensed to operate in Saskatoon.

In October 2019, the Province of Saskatchewan removed the cap on the number of cannabis retail stores permitted in each municipality, effective September 2020. Since that time, the number of cannabis retail stores has rapidly increased from the original six approved under the lottery to 30 stores.

In order to sell cannabis in Saskatchewan's market, cannabis production facilities must be licensed producers with the Government of Canada and must register with SLGA. There are currently two licensed cannabis production facilities in Saskatoon.

The federal *Cannabis Act* also permits micro-cultivation (growing area cannot exceed 200 sq m) as well as nurseries for seed and clone plant production (growing area cannot exceed 50 sq m).

Despite the rapid growth of the industry, prospective business owners continue to show interest in opening new or additional stores in Saskatoon. In addition to the 30 stores already licensed, several development permits are in various stages of approval. As the overall number of cannabis retail stores grows, prospective operators of cannabis retail stores are faced with increased difficulty in finding locations in core commercial areas, due to distancing requirements in the Zoning Bylaw. Further, several inquiries have

been received regarding cannabis production, micro-cultivation, nurseries, processing research and development facilities.

We expect to continue seeing changes in the number of stores and production facilities as the market stabilizes in the coming years. With Saskatchewan serving as a hub of agricultural activity in Canada, it will be interesting to see how this translates in terms of production, research and development of cannabis in Saskatoon and surrounding area.





URBAN DESIGN

Central Avenue Streetscape Project

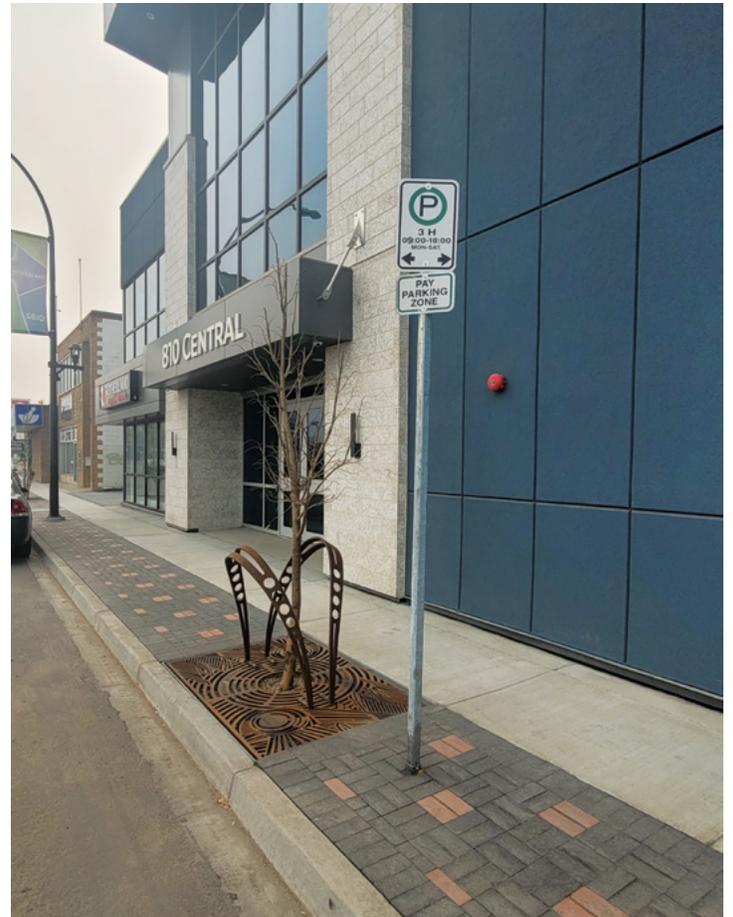
Trevor Tumach, Landscape Architect | 306-986-1734 | trevor.tumach@saskatoon.ca

The Central Avenue Master Plan approved by City Council in 2009 called for streetscape improvements on Central Avenue between 107th Street and 115th Street. Known as the Central Avenue Streetscape Project, it was divided into four phases. Phase 1 construction along the south side of the 109th Street intersection to the north side of the 110th Street intersection was completed in 2012. Phase 2 improvements further north along the east and west side of Central Avenue through to the north side of the 113th Street intersection was completed in 2015.

Phase 3 of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project was completed in 2021. The work involved design improvements south to 107th Street, including the continuation of the multi-use pathway, new pavers, street furniture and driveway realignments along Central Avenue. The Urban Design team is collaborating with the Sutherland Business Improvement District (Sutherland BID) to design a unique gateway feature into the district

Streetscape improvement projects are comprehensive plans involving multiple civic departments and private stakeholders, including business improvements districts (BIDs) and property owners. The Urban Design Team worked with area businesses to keep them apprised of the proposed design and timing of construction to help minimize any negative impacts on their businesses.

Phase 4 of the Central Avenue Streetscape Project encompasses the area from 113th Street to the CP rail line and will include a pedestrian crossing. Completion of this fourth and final phase will depend on funding availability, the future plan for the rail crossing and negotiations with CP Rail.



RECREATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

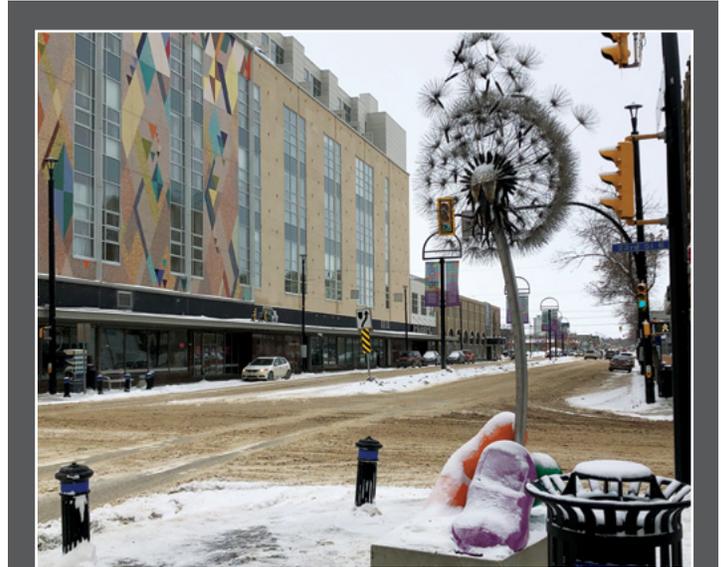
New Public Art on Display

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Public art enlivens our urban environment and encourages passersby to stop and reflect. A number of pieces of public art were put on display in Saskatoon during 2021. These include:



Title: Carousel
Artist: Karen Ho Fatt Lee
Location: Broadway Avenue & 10th Street (temporary)



Title: Make a Wish
Artist: Kyle Thornley
Location: 2nd Avenue & 23rd Street



Title: Out from Out Where X
Artist: Bryan Faubert
Location: North of City Hall (temporary)



Title: Resurgence
Artists: Henry Lau & Ruth Cuthand, painted by Steven Paul
Location: Avenue B & 20th Street

For more information on public art in Saskatoon, please visit saskatoon.ca/community-culture-heritage/arts-creativity/community-art.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Official Community Plan, Phase II

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The OCP is intended to be a living document, providing a framework that can be monitored and updated to reflect new directions to meet the City’s evolving needs.

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In 2020, City Council unanimously approved [Bylaw No. 9700, The Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020](#). This was followed by approval from the Province of Saskatchewan, resulting in a new Official Community Plan (OCP) for Saskatoon.

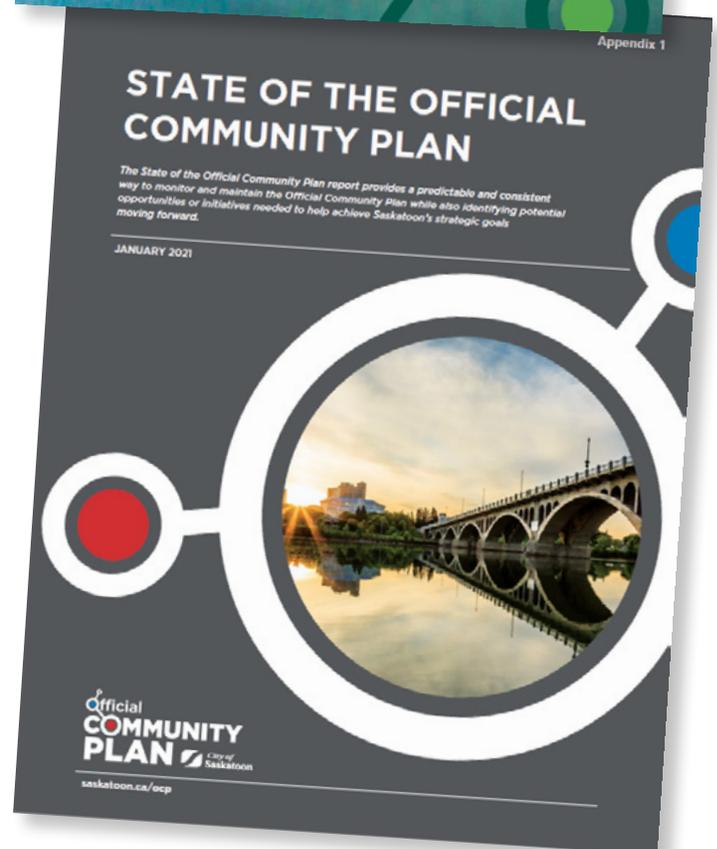
Created under the authority of *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, the OCP is the collective long-term vision for Saskatoon, guiding the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the community. It provides both inspiration and direction through a comprehensive policy framework to ensure the community’s vision is integrated into all aspects of City of Saskatoon planning, decision-making, and priority-setting. It brings focus and purpose to more detailed plans, including growth plans, financial plans, and strategic action plans, among others.

The first phase of the redesign project, now complete, resulted in an updated OCP; and the second phase involves developing and implementing a strategy to support the consistent use, monitoring, and maintenance of the OCP. Now well underway, this phase involves communication among City Departments, Advisory Committees of City Council, and other stakeholders regarding relevant policy direction to ensure the OCP continues to reflect the City’s evolving direction.

This strategy will help ensure the OCP is used as the primary document guiding development and city building in Saskatoon. It will support a consistent, integrated approach to the work done by City Administration and the recommendations made to City Council.

The OCP is intended to be a living document, providing a framework that can be monitored and updated to reflect new directions to meet the City’s evolving needs. A process will be established to track work and decisions that may inspire future amendments to the OCP. Every four years, a State of the OCP report will identify progress made toward achieving Saskatoon’s long-term vision and provide recommendations on amendments needed to continuously improve the OCP.

The first [State of the OCP](#) report was published in January 2021. For more information on the OCP, please visit saskatoon.ca/ocp.



MAPPING AND RESEARCH

Strategic Trends

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“ Data is presented through graphs, along with short write-ups to provide context and analysis. ”

The Strategic Trends document is an annual release from Planning and Development that provides insights into demographic, development, economic, environmental and social trends for Saskatoon and area. The document integrates data from several sources, including Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Conference Board of Canada, Government of Saskatchewan and City of Saskatoon departments. Data is presented through graphs, along with short write-ups to provide context and analysis.

Highlights of the 2021 Strategic Trends include:

- Population trends updated for 2021
- Indicators showing the measurable impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Indicators of a shift away from a “buyer’s market” to a “seller’s market” in Saskatoon’s real estate market
- Projections of post-pandemic economic recovery
- Updated voter turnout for the 2020 provincial and civic elections.

The complete 2021 Strategic Trends document can be found online at saskatoon.ca/planningpublicationsandmaps.





PLANNING PROJECT SERVICES

Updates to Landscaping Regulations

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As part of the Zoning Bylaw Review Project, the City reviewed landscaping regulations that apply to commercial, institutional, industrial, mixed-use and multi-family developments on private property. Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw were approved by City Council in December 2021.

Amendments focused on addressing stakeholder feedback, as well as supporting the objectives and policies outlined in the Official Community Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy, and Low Emissions Community Plan (including low impact development practices).

The topics considered as part of the review included:

- Reorganization of the Landscaping Section of the Zoning Bylaw (Section 7) to be more user friendly, provide clarity and remove redundancies.
- Add landscaping standards to the Zoning Bylaw for artificial turf in industrial districts, hard / soft landscaping and organic mulch. These topics were only listed in the Landscape Guidelines.



- Provide flexibility for tree planting requirements where development is adjacent to boulevard trees with large canopies.
- Add tree planting requirements in rear yards where landscaping requirements apply.
- Allow for alternative landscaping practices, including xeriscaping, rain gardens and bioswales.
- Provide additional flexibility for non-conforming sites in Established Neighbourhoods, C.N. Industrial Area and the Airport Business Area (e.g., change of use, additions).
- Amend the growing season in the Zoning Bylaw to align with the Parks Department growing season.

The Landscape Guidelines (a companion document to the Zoning Bylaw) was also updated to reflect Zoning Bylaw amendments and provide additional clarity.

The Zoning Bylaw Review Project began in 2019 and involves several updates to the Zoning Bylaw, including a comprehensive review of the RMTN/ RMTN1 Districts, updates to neighbourhood level infill regulations, adoption of bicycle parking regulations and other amendments. More information can be found at saskatoon.ca/zoningbylawreview.





RECREATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

River Landing Mural

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The mural is one of the largest in the city, measuring 155 sq m (1,675 sq ft).

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Working with Alejandro Romero, Arts Community Consultant with the City of Saskatoon’s Community Development, artists were invited to submit mural ideas for the Senator Sid Buckwold bridge abutment wall. Artists were asked for mural submissions that highlighted one or more of the following: ties to the river, ties to the history of the land Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge sits on and/or ties to the history of the Indigenous community. It was also important for the artwork to minimize the opportunity for graffiti.

The entry “Inner City” by Saskatchewan artist Josh Jacobson was chosen. The mural speaks to how the natural elements of the river

blend River Landing with the cityscape. Jacobson brings vibrancy through colour to an area that can feel quite dark compared to the brightness of the rest of River Landing.

The mural is one of the largest in the city, measuring 155 sq m (1,675 sq ft). It highlights an urban female jackrabbit bouncing towards Saskatoon city centre. The jackrabbit might be considered the main character of the story. Well adapted to the urban environment, she is aware that things move quickly here and has learned to co-exist with the city’s other inhabitants.

Walking left to right, the cityscape blends with modern geometric design elements and the wall becomes more populated by a variety of animal silhouettes. These animals illustrate the diversity of wildlife that inhabit the South Saskatchewan River valley as well as the surrounding urban environment.

Given the location of the wall, Jacobson also wanted to highlight the important role River Landing plays in our vibrant, growing city, as it has become an integral space for our cultural and business communities.

The current issue of *Planning + Design* is available for download at saskatoon.ca

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