



SASKATOON'S WINTER CITY STRATEGY

LET'S TALK ABOUT WINTER!

WINTER CITY STRATEGY
DISCUSSION GUIDE



 *City of*
Saskatoon

A background image of a snowy park. In the foreground, there's a snow-covered path leading towards a circular stone fountain. The fountain is partially covered in snow. To the right, there are several evergreen trees, and to the left, some bare deciduous trees. The sky is bright and hazy, suggesting a sunny day in winter. The overall scene is peaceful and wintry.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Let's Talk About Winter!

The City of Saskatoon is partnering with the community to develop a Winter City Strategy that will identify how we can work together collectively to make Saskatoon a great place to live in the winter!

Creating this plan means having some important conversations and hearing from many people about the strengths that currently exist in our city in the winter, the challenges that winter brings, and priority areas we need to address to create a great winter city.

This Discussion Guide is a tool for residents, community groups, businesses and organizations – it is an invitation to participate!

You may participate on your own, or get a group of friends, peers or colleagues together for a “Kitchen Table Talk”. When you are done, return the completed booklet to us in one of the following ways:

ONLINE: The questionnaire is available online at Saskatoon.ca/wintercityyx. Simply answer the questions online and press “Submit”.

EMAIL: Print off the questionnaire, complete the questions, and scan and Email the questionnaire to: wintercityyx@saskatoon.ca

MAIL: Print off the questionnaire, complete the questions and mail it to:
WinterCityYXE c/o Environmental & Corporate Initiatives,
222 Third Avenue North, Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

Completed guides are due by April 15, 2017.

Questions?

If you need some help planning your Kitchen Table Talk or have questions, please Email wintercityyx@saskatoon.ca or call 306-975-2487.



TIPS FOR KITCHEN TABLE TALK HOSTS

As a Kitchen Table Talk host, you are gathering people and facilitating the discussion.

Below are some tips:

1. **Plan:** Gather a group of friends, family or colleagues together. Any two people or more who have an interest in how to make Saskatoon a better winter in the cold winter months can create a discussion group. This is an opportunity to contribute as individuals, organizations, parents, teachers, business employees, etc. Feel free to use existing groups of which you are already a part, such as business or community groups. Please review the background information provided to help frame your discussion. If you need some inspiration visit our inventory of winter facilities, events and activities located at Saskatoon.ca/wintercityyxe!
2. **Meet:** Pick a place to meet. Decide ahead of time how long you will meet.
3. **Discuss:** Make sure everyone has a chance to talk, the discussion stays on topic and the group can summarize their top ideas for each question.
4. **Submit:** Complete the questionnaire online, or email or mail it to the City of Saskatoon by April 15, 2017. (See Page 2 for submission options).



DEVELOPING A WINTER CITY STRATEGY FOR SASKATOON

The Winter City Strategy will help us identify what could be done differently in our community to celebrate what makes Saskatoon unique as a four-season place that is inviting, vibrant and prosperous, even in the coldest months of the year. It will tell us how we are doing now and what we can do better.

We have identified four key areas which will help us achieve the following:

- **Winter Life:** Celebrate the inviting and fun quality of life we have here, even in the coldest months of the year.
- **Winter Design:** Improve community comfort and accessibility for everyone, even in the ice and snow.
- **Winter Culture:** Build enthusiasm for winter, take advantage of winter opportunities, and tell the story of our winter city.
- **Winter Economy:** Address challenges associated with winter to create a more vibrant economy in the winter.

The Strategy will outline both short term and long term winter goals for the future.



What are the steps in creating a Winter City Strategy?

Step 1: Building Blocks - Timeline: Winter 2017

Build on the Strength of Existing Assets

We are working with community groups to develop an inventory of existing assets that support the experience of winter in Saskatoon.

We are conducting research on what other cities are doing to make winter great in their communities.

Engage the Community in Change

We are gathering input and feedback from residents, businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders to develop a 'blizzard' of ideas on ways in which Saskatoon can be made more inviting for all during the winter season.

Step 2: Gap Analysis & Identify Priority Areas - Timeline: By end of 2017

Based on research conducted, we will identify what is missing in Saskatoon that would make Saskatoon a great winter city. We will develop an interim report with an update on findings and activities to date and identify next steps for moving the Strategy forward.

Step 3: Continue Building the Foundation - Timeline: Winter 2018

We will continue to work with the community on priority action areas and to develop the Strategy into a 5-year action plan.

Step 4: Develop an Action Plan - Timeline: Winter 2018 and beyond

Based on all our research and the feedback we receive from the community, we will create a detailed 5-year plan that outlines the actions we need to take to create a great winter city.



WHAT MAKES A GREAT WINTER CITY?

Across North America and internationally, cities that experience dark, cold and snowy winters are developing new ways to help citizens embrace, rather than dread, the cold winter months.

In Saskatoon, we will develop our winter strategies based on the answers we find to the following questions:

Improving our Winter Life: How can we celebrate the inviting and fun quality of life we have here, even in the coldest months of the year?

Improving our Winter Design: How can we improve community comfort and accessibility for everyone, even in the ice and snow?

Improving our Winter Culture: How can we build enthusiasm for winter, take advantage of winter opportunities, and tell the story of our winter city?

Improving our Winter Economy: How can we address challenges associated with winter to create a more vibrant economy in the winter?



OUR WINTER CITY PILLARS DEFINED

Winter Life: Celebrating the inviting and fun quality of life we have here, even in the coldest months of the year.

Let's talk about finding ways to expand the opportunities for getting out in winter. *Winter Life* is about embracing the winter season, and celebrating the unique activities and opportunities available in our city that make life fun and interesting.

Saskatoon is vibrant and inviting in the summer season with a wide variety of things to do outside. What if our winter season was equally inviting? There are already many ways to adopt an active lifestyle in the winter months – skating, cross country skiing, fatbiking, outdoor running, tobogganing, and the list goes on!

A winter lifestyle also includes simply getting out, even if it means to head back inside again to the many indoor leisure opportunities available in Saskatoon! Walking to the library, Conservatory or to the same locations you would walk to in summer also contributes to enhancing Winter Life in our community.

Winter Design: Improving community comfort and accessibility for everyone, even in the ice and snow.

Winter Design refers to things we can do to plan, design and maintain our communities better; to make the winter months more enjoyable.

Some examples include:

- Ensuring water, washrooms and warming locations are built into the design of parks and public spaces.
- Ensuring new buildings are built to take advantage of the winter sun.
- Installing lighting to make the darker winter season inviting and beautiful.
- Creating public spaces that take advantage of the sun and block out the cold wind (this is called creating a micro-climate and can be part of permanent designs for public or private spaces, or can be created seasonally by creating snow or ice walls or bringing in designed wind breakers).



Winter Culture: Building enthusiasm for winter, taking advantage of winter opportunities, and telling the story of our winter city.

The City of Edmonton is a great example of a city that is changing its winter culture so that citizens embrace winter. Edmonton is being recognized around the world for its Winter City Strategy, and citizens have proclaimed that it's time they celebrate the joy of winter and embrace the season. They have a plan in place that sees the community working together, and thinking differently, so they can become a great world-leading winter city.

Other examples of Canadian cities where citizens look forward to winter are Quebec City and Ottawa. In Quebec City, the Winter Carnival offers a diverse program of winter activities and is one of the world's largest winter carnivals, drawing thousands of visitors to the city each year. In Ottawa thousands of citizens look forward to skating to work each day during the winter on the Rideau Canal Skateway, the largest naturally frozen skating rink in the world.

In cities that are embracing a *Winter Culture*, it is the contributions of businesses, community arts and culture groups, community sports and recreation groups, and the positive attitude of citizens themselves that makes all the difference.

Winter Economy: Addressing challenges associated with winter to create a more vibrant economy in the winter.

It is common throughout many cities for things to slow down in the winter season (outside the Christmas shopping period). Let's talk about ways in which Saskatoon's *Winter Economy* could be made more vibrant to sustain our small businesses, attract visitors to new and existing events and festivals, and create a fun and inviting atmosphere that entices people to get out and connect with each other.

Some examples for expanding our *Winter Economy* include:

- Hosting a "dine-around" within one of Saskatoon's shopping districts where citizens and visitors can take advantage of great deals or new exciting experiences by stopping in to participating restaurants for warm-up appetizers, hot meals, or a warm after dinner drink!
- In Winnipeg, a "pop-up restaurant" is developed each winter, hosted by the top chefs in the city. This unique event is sold out each year and diners enjoy both top-quality food and drink, and the opportunity to eat outside at a big community table with their friends, family, and new acquaintances!
- In Edmonton, entrepreneurs are being encouraged to investigate business opportunities that would thrive in the winter, like the manufacture and sales of warm clothing and touque/mitt stores, etc.



SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

By answering the questions that follow, we will better understand your perspectives on what changes are needed to make Saskatoon a great winter city.

NOTE: You may also submit your answers to these questions online at [Saskatoon.ca/wintercityyyxe](https://saskatoon.ca/wintercityyyxe).

1. What do you love about winter in Saskatoon today? (our assets)

Winter Life (i.e. activities and facilities):

Winter Design (i.e. comfort and mobility):

Winter Culture (i.e. cultural events):

Winter Economy (i.e. shopping, dining, etc.):

2. What is not working well? (our challenges)

Winter Life:

Winter Design:



Winter Culture:

Winter Economy:

3. What do you think Saskatoon could learn from other centres to make winter better? Brainstorm what changes could be made in our city that would have the biggest impact for each area (our opportunities):

Winter Life:

Winter Design:

Winter Culture:

Winter Economy:

4. If you had to choose your top 3 ideas for action, what would they be?

5. Do you have any other feedback or ideas to share about the Winter City Strategy?



ABOUT YOUR KITCHEN TABLE TALK

1. How many people participated in your discussion group?

2. How do you want to be identified? A group name? The host's name?

3. What are the participants names/emails? (optional)

Completed guides are due April 15, 2017.

Ways to Submit Your Responses

ONLINE: The questionnaire is available online at Saskatoon.ca/wintercityyx. Simply answer the questions online and press "Submit".

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