



Frequently Asked Questions

April 2018

The Bridging to Tomorrow project includes the construction of the North Commuter Parkway and the new Traffic Bridge, both of which will provide significant benefits to the citizens of Saskatoon and the province.

Who is building the North Commuter Parkway and Traffic Bridge?

Graham Commuter Partners (GCP) was awarded the contract in October 2015.

What is the total estimated cost of the project over the 33 years?

The estimated cost of the project is \$497.7 million. This includes capital, operating, maintenance and rehabilitation over the 33 year period (including an estimated 2% inflation on operating, maintenance and rehabilitation costs).

How is the project being funded?

Through the PPP Canada Fund, the federal government is providing an investment of up to 25% of eligible costs up to a maximum of \$66 million. The Province is contributing \$50 million to the project. The City of Saskatoon is contributing the remaining funds to complete the project.

What is the estimated construction schedule for the project?

Construction started on the Traffic Bridge in late 2015. Work on the North Commuter Parkway began in early 2016. Substantial completion, meaning both bridges will be open and operational, is October 2018.

What regulatory approvals were required prior to construction?

Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Transport Canada, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, and Meewasin Valley Authority.

How can I stay updated on the Bridging to Tomorrow project?

Our webpage, saskatoon.ca/bridging, contains project updates, links to live webcams, quarterly video updates, and time lapse video. All updates are also posted on the City's social media accounts: "Saskatoon City News" on Facebook and "@cityofsaskatoon" on Twitter.

In person, anyone can watch Traffic Bridge progress at the River Landing viewing area. North Commuter Parkway construction can be viewed from the Meewasin Trail just east of the cul-de-sac at the north end of Kinnear Avenue (north of Silverwood Golf Course).

North Commuter Parkway

The six-lane North Commuter Parkway will connect Saskatoon's Marquis Industrial Area to neighbourhoods on the east-side. It will also accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

How much traffic will use the new bridge and parkway?

Over 20,000 vehicles per day are projected to use the bridge in its first year. At a population of 400,000, about 50,000 vehicles will use the Parkway each day.

Will the Parkway be a freeway?

No, the Parkway will be an arterial road and bridge. The operating speed of the roadway and bridge west of Central Avenue will be 70 km/hr. The operating speed of the proposed roadway east of Central Avenue is expected to be 50 km/hr.

How many lanes of traffic will be included?

Marquis Drive and McOrmond Drive will increase from 4 to 6 lanes at each end leading up to the 6-lane bridge. McOrmond Drive will be 5 lanes from the east side of the bridge to the intersection with Central Avenue, and 4 lanes from the intersection with Central Avenue east to the intersection with Fedoruk Drive. Central Avenue will be 4 lanes.

Will heavy commercial trucks be allowed on this bridge?

The Parkway is neither a freeway nor a designated truck route. Saskatoon's Traffic Bylaw (Bylaw 7200) states that commercial hauling should follow designated truck routes - except for local deliveries which require trucks to take the most direct route from a designated truck route to their destination.

Will the Meewasin Valley Trail continue under the bridge portion of the Parkway?

In this area, the Meewasin Valley Trail currently runs adjacent to Wanuskewin Road on the west side of the South Saskatchewan River. This project includes a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Wanuskewin Road and Marquis Drive. The Meewasin Valley Trail does not currently extend this far north on the east side of the river, but provisions are being made to provide for a future trail crossing of the Parkway on the east side of the river.

How long will the Parkway last before it needs replacement?

The bridge section has been designed and constructed to a minimum life cycle of 75 years, as required by the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code. The associated roadways are being designed and constructed to a minimum life cycle of 50 years. Regular maintenance work will be required to keep the infrastructure in good condition.

Traffic Bridge

The new Traffic Bridge will serve as a convenient link for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists crossing the South Saskatchewan River between Downtown and Nutana.

How many vehicles will travel on the bridge each day?

The Traffic Bridge will accommodate average traffic volumes estimated to approach 11,000 vehicles per day, with capacity to serve over 20,000 vehicles per day.

How many pedestrians will use the bridge each day?

Prior to the closure of the original bridge in 2010, the City counted: 151 pedestrians, cyclists and skateboarders between 7am and 9am on a typical day; 107 pedestrians and cyclists between 11:30am and 1:30pm on a typical day; and 184 pedestrians and cyclists between 4pm and 6pm on a typical day.

How has the City ensured protection of the land around the bridge, the riverbank, and the river itself throughout the construction process?

The construction process is designed to protect the river and surrounding area. Additionally, the City has been working with a number of regulatory authorities to obtain required approvals and permits related to environmental protection. These include the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Transport Canada, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, and the Meewasin Valley Authority.

Why was the existing Traffic Bridge closed?

The Traffic Bridge was closed on August 24, 2010 after preliminary results from the scheduled comprehensive inspection showed serious corrosion and deterioration of some steel members underneath the deck.

How did the City decide to replace the existing bridge with a new modern steel truss bridge for all modes of transportation?

A Traffic Needs Assessment and Functional Planning Study was completed, and extensive public consultation took place. A conceptual design, based on the approved functional plans, was developed and approved by the City and its technical advisor, Stantec Consulting.

What will the new Traffic Bridge look like?

The new Traffic Bridge design is similar to the design of the old bridge, but wider to accommodate emergency vehicles. GCP is using conventional weathering steel with a protective coating within the splash zone. This will result in a two tone colour between the lower and upper portions of the structure until the patina can form on the exposed portions of the weathering steel. This process will eventually turn the entire bridge into one brown colour tone.