



Frequently Asked Questions October 2018

The Bridging to Tomorrow project included the construction of the Chief Mistawasis Bridge, Central Avenue and McOrmond Drive extensions, and the Traffic Bridge – all of which provide significant benefits to the citizens of Saskatoon. On October 2, 2018, both bridges and connecting roadways officially opened to the public.

Who built the Chief Mistawasis Bridge, Traffic Bridge, and connecting roadways?
Graham Commuter Partners (GCP) was awarded the contract in October 2015.

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

The three orders of government funded the \$238.8 million Bridging to Tomorrow Project which includes Chief Mistawasis Bridge, McOrmond Drive and Central Avenue extensions, and the Traffic Bridge. The Government of Canada is contributing up to 25 per cent of eligible costs, the Government of Saskatchewan is contributing \$50 million toward the Chief Mistawasis Bridge, and the City is funding the remainder.

When did construction begin?

Construction started on the Traffic Bridge in late 2015. Work on the Chief Mistawasis Bridge and Central Avenue / McOrmond Drive extensions began in early 2016. Both bridges were to be open and operational in October of 2018. Opening day was October 2, 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.

Chief Mistawasis Bridge

The six-lane Chief Mistawasis Bridge connects Saskatoon's Marquis Industrial Area to neighbourhoods on the east-side. It also accommodates pedestrians and cyclists.

How much traffic will use the new bridge and connecting roadways?

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.

Is the new bridge and connecting roadways a freeway?

No, it is an arterial road and bridge. The operating speed of the roadway and bridge west of Central Avenue is 70 km/hr. The operating speed of the roadway east of Central Avenue and through the Northeast Swale is 50 km/hr.

How many lanes of traffic are included?

Marquis Drive and McOrmond Drive increase from 4 to 6 lanes at each end leading up to the 6-lane bridge. McOrmond Drive is 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 is 4 lanes.

Are heavy commercial trucks be allowed on this bridge?

Chief Mistawasis Bridge and the Central Avenue and McOrmond Drive extensions is not a freeway or 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.

The legal weight classification on Chief Mistawasis Bridge is the same as almost any road in Saskatoon at 62,500 kg. There are only three streets in Saskatoon that have a different classification/weight restriction (Saskatchewan Crescent, Zimmerman Road, and another nearby grid road).

Will the Meewasin Valley Trail continue under the Chief Mistawasis Bridge?

In this area, the Meewasin Valley Trail currently runs adjacent to Wanuskewin Road on the west side of the South Saskatchewan River. This project included 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 bridge on the east side of the river.

How long will the new bridge and roadways last before they need 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 were designed and constructed to a minimum life cycle of 50 years. Regular maintenance work will be required to keep the infrastructure in good condition. Graham Commuter Partners will maintain the bridge and roadways for the next 30 years.

Traffic Bridge

The new Traffic Bridge serves 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 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on a typical day; and 184 pedestrians and cyclists between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on a typical day.

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

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

Why was the original Traffic Bridge closed?

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

How did the City decide to replace the original 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 does 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. Graham Commuter Partners used conventional weathering steel with a protective coating within the splash zone. This results 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.