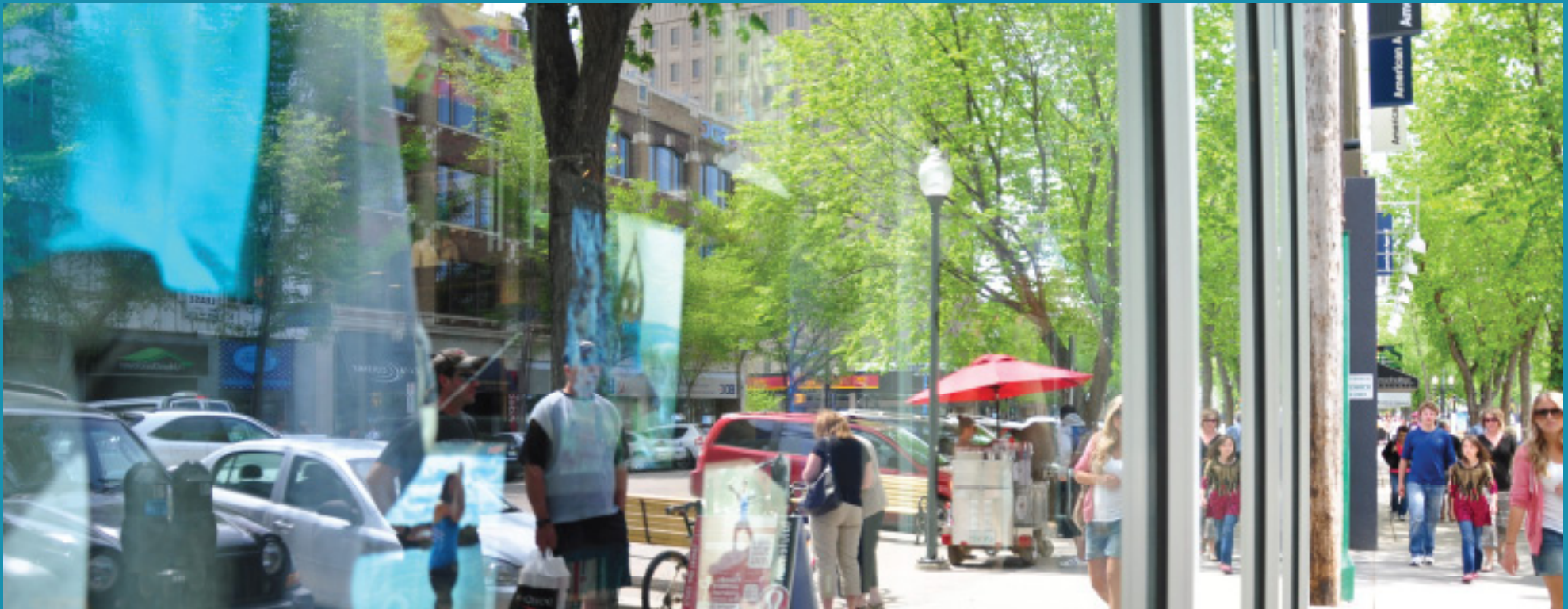


# City Centre Plan

Strategic Framework - City Centre Plan Phase 3  
October 2013





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## Acknowledgements & Disclaimers

The City Centre Plan was commissioned by the City of Saskatoon. Stantec Limited, Inc was asked to produce this report that illustrates a Plan for Saskatoon's City Centre. The Steering Committee provided strong guidance, background information, and support throughout the creation of the report.

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors, Stantec Limited, Inc, and are not to be construed as being the adopted policy of the City of Saskatoon. The data and supporting information used in the study came from a variety of sources including the City of Saskatoon Public Spaces, Activity, and Urban Form Report of 2011 and the Saskatoon Speaks Community Vision of 2011. Although every care has been taken to ensure the reliability of the information supplied, we can not warrant the completeness or accuracy of the data.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## PROLOGUE

This phase of the City Centre Study is the third of a four part process. Part One included the Public Space, Activities, and Urban Form Report of 2011. Part Two included the Saskatoon Speaks Visioning Process of 2011. Part Three, The City Centre Plan, outlines a series of design initiatives and policies that ensure that the City achieves the vision of Saskatoon Speaks. It guides the design of public places, transportation, parking, infrastructure, sustainable design practices, design guidelines, zoning, heritage, and culture. The Plan builds upon an extensive public process in which residents and stakeholders were asked to provide guidance on the vision and on the details of the Plan. The Steering Committee of CCP and the general public provided invaluable support and direction to create this report. Part Four of the process will include a master plan for the Civic Precinct that will commence in 2015.

## VISION

Saskatoon City Centre will be a destination for the region and a premiere location to live, grow innovative businesses, and enjoy the benefits of a strong community. The City Centre Plan will foster a vibrant mix of uses including new residences, commercial offices, retail and restaurants, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities. Building upon the historic assets of the City, including its heritage buildings, its many varied neighborhoods, its historic street grid, and riverfront, the Plan will create an improved network of walkable streets that will be home to a diverse and inclusive community. New public places and centres for growth will be supported by improved transit and mobility options. It will be attractive during the winter season as well as during the warmer months. The City will continue to be a leader in Canada for quality of life and sustainable planning. With appropriate strategic improvements, Saskatoon can benefit from the region's growth and attract private investment to make the vision a reality.

## PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The City is anticipated to grow to a population of 500,000 during the next 20-30 years. The City Centre Plan encourages a portion of this residential and business growth to occur within the City Centre. It fosters residential, business, and cultural uses through a series of overall framework plans, neighbourhood plans, and policy initiatives. The overall framework plan strengthens pedestrian connectivity between the diverse portions of the City and creates a walkable street environment. An open space framework plan connects existing parks to new parks with a network of green streets. The Plan organizes the City Centre into a series of neighbourhoods, some that exist today and others that are emerging with population growth. The overall framework plan connects the neighbourhoods to each other and gives the City Centre a cohesive structure. Within each of the neighbourhoods, design initiatives are proposed to strengthen their vitality and improve quality of life. The Plan is designed to provide a comfortable environment throughout the seasons and includes several design initiatives to mitigate the cold climate.

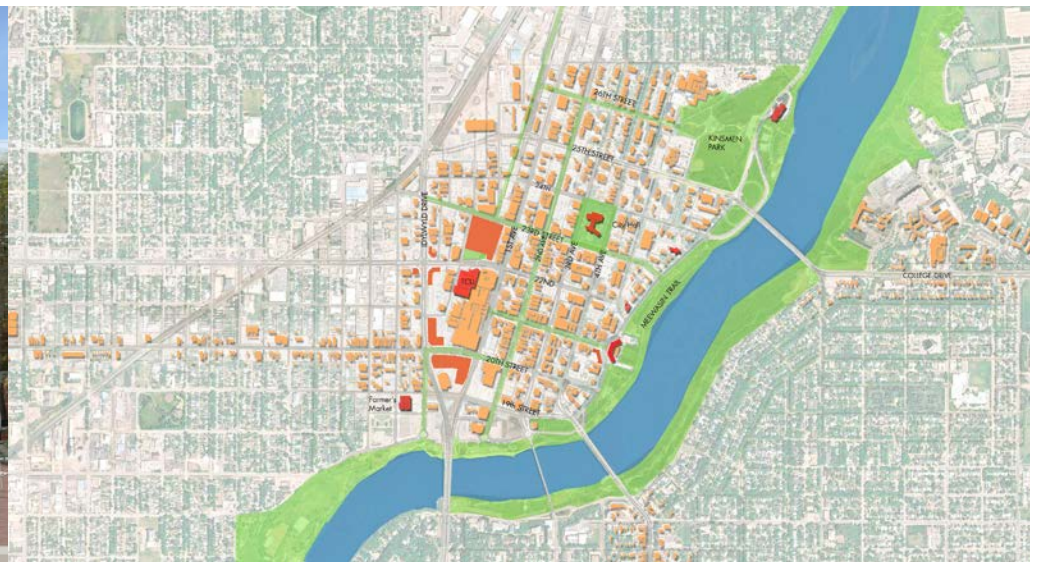
Several policy initiatives are outlined in the Plan to support sustainable growth. These include design guidelines for new development that encourage a walkable Downtown street environment and allow

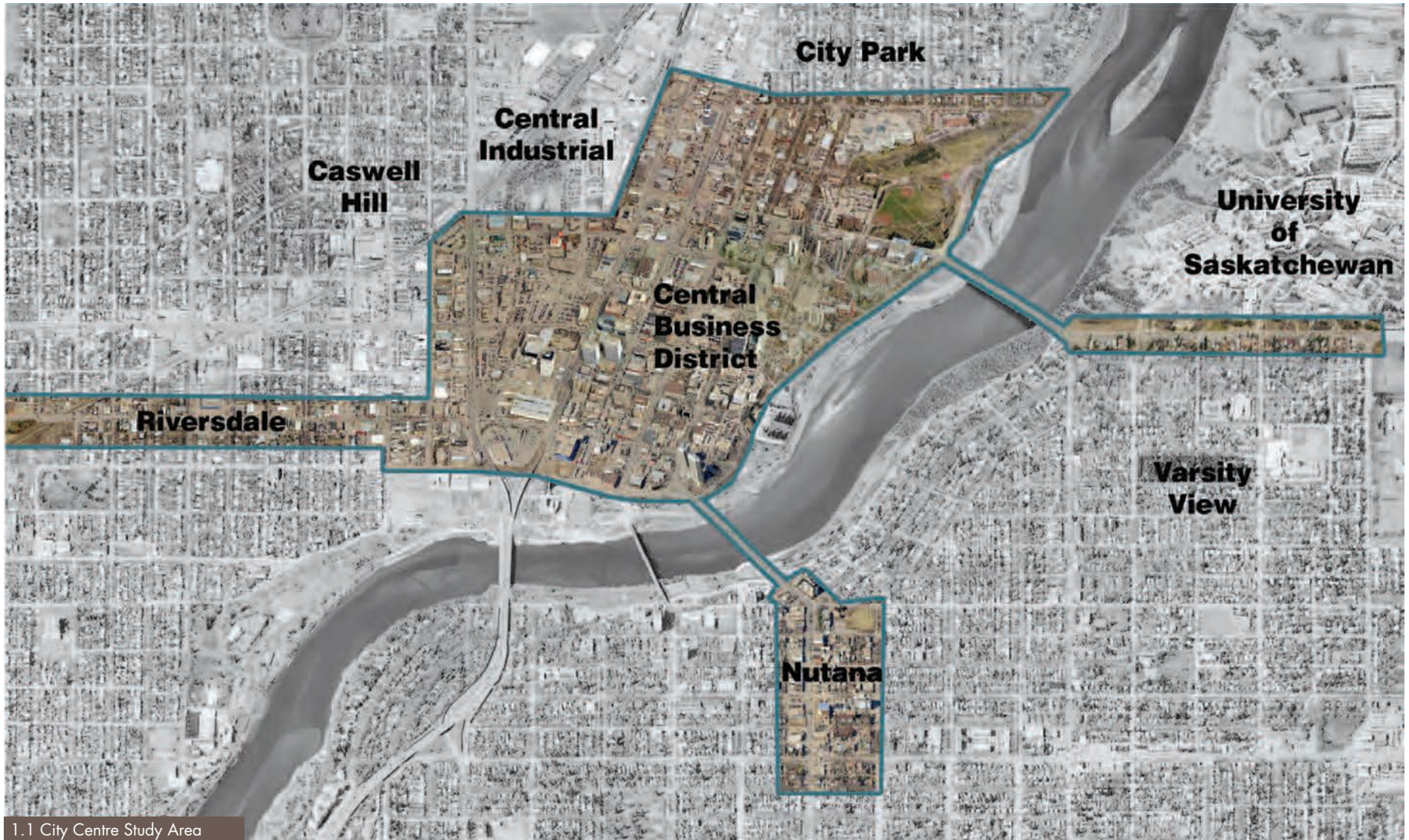
developer creativity. A limited number of zoning adjustments and incentives are proposed to encourage construction of structured parking and other beneficial uses. Incentive programs that encourage residential and office growth are also included. Protection is provided for heritage buildings and support is provided for arts and culture.

The Plan may be further described by its 12 key strategies. More detail on these key strategies is described in Chapter IV. The strategies are organized into a series of initiatives described in section A, B, C of Chapter IV.

## 12 KEY STRATEGIES

1. A strong and unique City Centre retail area as a destination for the region
2. A new west Downtown
3. A new network of public spaces throughout the City Centre to serve all seasons
4. A broad network of pedestrian priority streets
5. Improved connections to surrounding neighbourhoods
6. Further development of arts & culture within the City Centre
7. Stronger existing neighbourhoods
8. Improved transportation, transit, bike, and parking systems
9. Sustainable design
10. City policies to foster private and public investment
11. Residents are a priority
12. Business development is a priority





1.1 City Centre Study Area

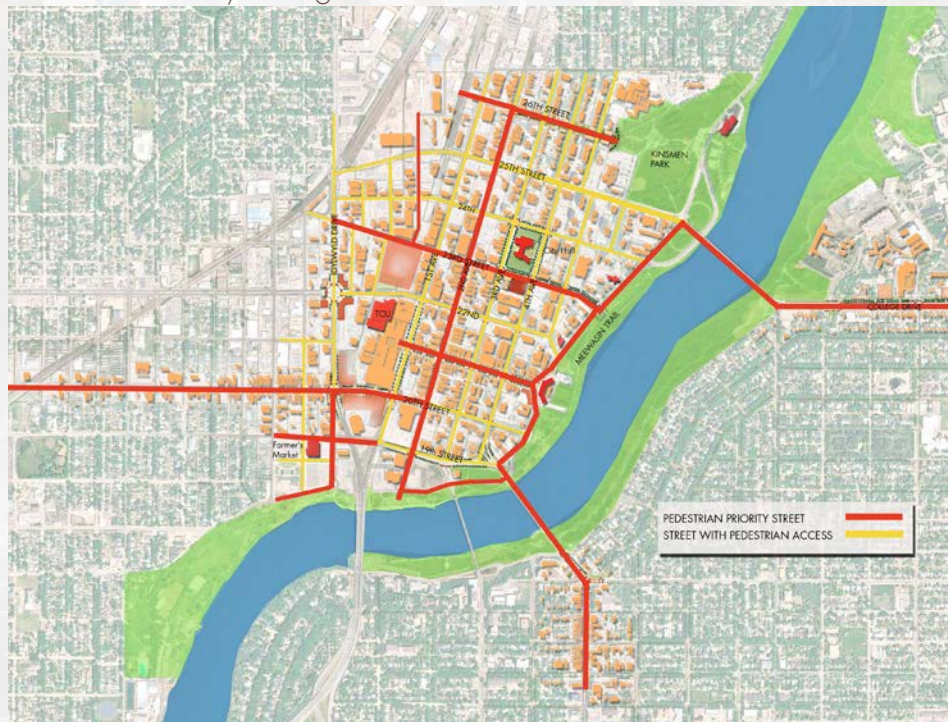
Extent of City Centre Plan

# PLAN SUMMARY

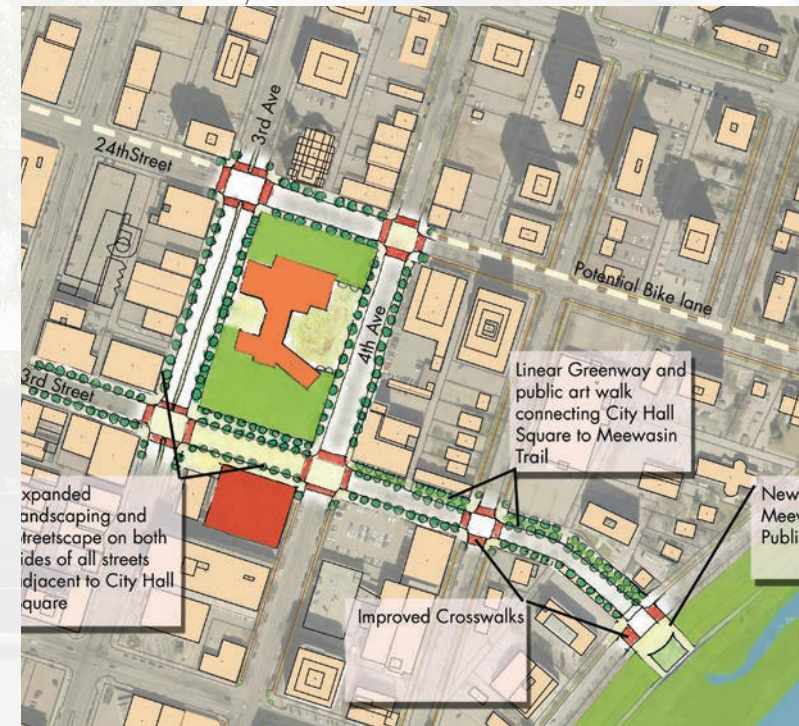
## Three general sections of the Plan: A, B, C

The Key Strategies of the Plan are grouped into three parts, A) Public Places, B) Moving Around and Infrastructure, and C) Policy to Enable Development. A summary chart at right provides a list of several of the Plan's principal actions.

Pedestrian Priority Linkages



Plan Detail at City Hall





# PLAN SUMMARY

## A Public Places

See Chapter IV.A For Details

### Increase the breadth and variety of businesses in the CBD

- Provide improved walkability, transit service, public space improvements, and parking access

### New West Downtown between Idylwyld Drive and 1st Ave.

- Establish new mixed-use development lining primary streets including 20th street and 22nd street

### New Public Space Network

- Expand City Hall Square landscaping
- Extend network of green pedestrian walks from Meewasin Trail into neighbourhoods
- Create new public plaza
- Provide seasonal adjustments for public spaces

### Pedestrian Priority Street Network

- Improve pedestrian facilities at 19th St, 20th, 21st, 23rd, 26th streets, 1st Ave, College Drive, Idylwyld Drive, and Broadway Ave

### Hub for Arts & Culture

- Extend art district around TCU Place and new public plaza
- Create public art & heritage walk that links the neighbourhoods of the City

### Allow new outdoor cafes at Spadina Crescent

## B Moving Around & Infrastructure

See Chapter IV.B For Details

### Transit

- Establish a Rapid Transit Bus Route
- Eliminate the Bus Mall

### Balanced Street Design

- Provide vehicular street improvements with pedestrian amenities
- 1st Avenue Concept
- Idylwyld Drive Concept

### Bike Network

- Expand dedicated bike network
- Modify bike access at ends of bridges
- Establish bike parking
- Create plan for bike sharing

### General Infrastructure

- Future river crossings

### Sustainable Infrastructure Design

- Create plan for installation of rain gardens network on key streets
- Provide heated sidewalks that use waste heat
- Upgrade of street lighting
- Monitoring of trash recycling system

## C Policy to Enable Development

See Chapter IV.C For Details

### Design Guidelines

- Recommendations on zoning adjustments
- Architectural guidelines
- Sustainable guidelines

### Development Incentives

- Residential Kick-Start Program
- Office incentive program
- Grocery store planning

### Sustainable Building Design

- Review and revise building bylaw to accommodate sustainable features
- Review and improve standards for local government facilities
- Environmental policy strategies

### Heritage & Culture

- Establish a register of heritage buildings
- Review building bylaw to accommodate historic buildings
- Establish City Centre as centre of culture

### Structured Parking Policy

- Commission a Parking Study
- Establish program to construct public parking structures
- Parking structure design guidelines
- Minimize new surface parking

# II. BACKGROUND



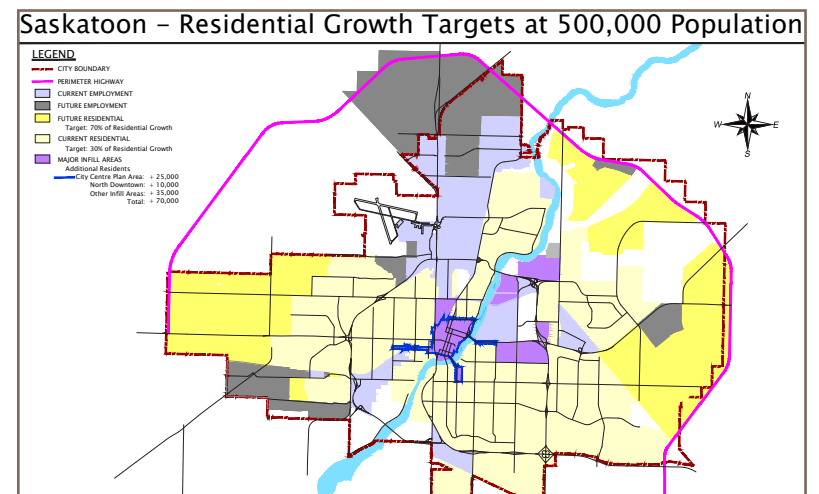
## II.a GROWTH OF SASKATOON

Saskatoon is experiencing a period of strong growth. The current population, estimated at 239,000, is estimated to grow at 2-2.5% per annum and may reach 500,000 over the next 20 to 30 years. It is anticipated that the area within the City Centre boundary (see Page 5) will attract up to 25,000 new residents, of which approximately 15,000 residents will make their homes in the Downtown neighbourhood.

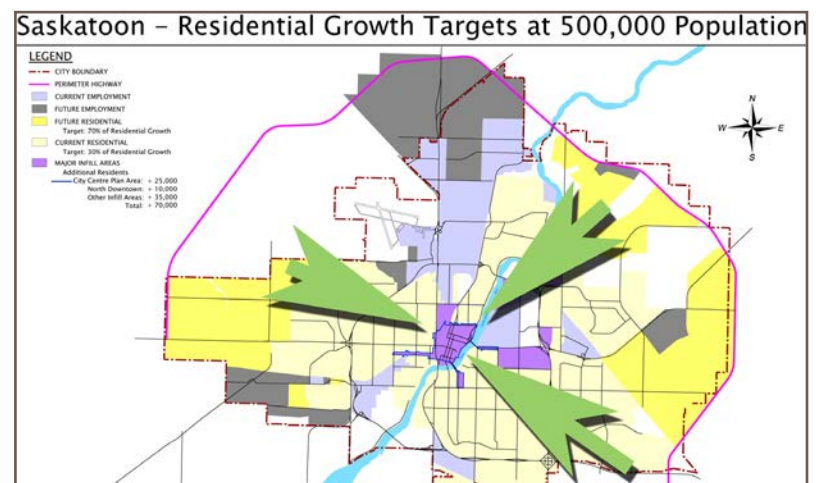
Retail growth has been strong in recent years. About 8,000 square metres-20,000 square metres of retail space has been added on average each of the past three years. The retail space vacancy rate was 2.48% in 2012. The highest lease rates in the City are located at Broadway, University Heights, and Downtown.

The City Commercial and Industrial Development Study of November 2011 reviews growth of businesses as the population reaches 325,000. It forecasts a 41% growth of retail, office, and industrial space needs.

While the City Centre area is anticipated to experience a portion of the overall City's growth, it will take several measures to ensure more growth is directed to the centre and promote a strong Downtown area. Policies that encourage growth of the City Centre and also manage the pattern of suburban growth will allow the City to develop important resources, including business, cultural, social, and educational resources that will benefit the entire region. Sustainable development patterns of growth, which include walkable and transit-oriented planning, are well supported by directing growth to the City Centre.



II.A.1 Projected Growth in City



II.A.2 Recommended Growth: Direct Portion of Overall Growth to City Centre

## II.b Related Planning Efforts

The City of Saskatoon has undertaken several recent initiatives to promote high quality growth in the City Centre and in the City as a whole.

Phase One of the City Centre Plan is the Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report of November 2011. It discusses aspects of urban life, public space, public activity, and opportunities for the City Centre.

Phase Two of the City Centre Plan was Saskatoon Speaks of June 2011 which was both a report and an important public outreach process. This process led to a Community Vision and Strategic Plan which included social well-being, parks, arts and culture, transportation, sustainable growth patterns, the environment, and the economy.

The City of Saskatoon Culture Plan of 2011 outlines a series of strategies to encourage growth of the area's culture including diverse religions, festivals, languages, founding nations, progressive ideas, creativity, artistry and craftsmanship, heritage, and natural heritage. One of its goals is to establish the City Centre as a hub for Arts and Culture.

The Integrated Growth Plan of March 2012 discusses strategies for planning communities in the region, transit-oriented development, strategic infill development, and transportation. The Plan will guide a regional study of transportation and its relationship with sustainable growth patterns.

The City of Saskatoon Strategic Plan 2012-2022 outlines several goals including a culture of continuous improvement, financial sustainability, quality of life, environmental leadership, sustainable growth, moving around, and economic diversity & prosperity.

The Heritage Policy and Program Review of August 2012 recommends increased protection measures for the City's historic and cultural assets.

Other reports include local plans such as Broadway 360, Riversdale Local Area Plan of 2008, City Park Local Area Plan of 2010, and The Warehouse District Local Area Plan of 2002.



II.C.1 Saskatoon Speaks

## II.c Public Consultation Process

The City of Saskatoon initiated a significant public outreach process with the Saskatoon Speaks initiative. With 7000-10,000 citizens involved over eight months, it was the largest public outreach initiative undertaken by the City. It included participants from all backgrounds and all walks of life.

Saskatoon Speaks articulated a vision for the City. The vision includes:

- An inclusive and integrated city that promotes social well-being
- An active healthy and safe city with parks and recreation
- A culturally vibrant city
- A city with many options for moving around
- A city on the path of sustainable growth
- A thriving City Centre
- A green city
- A business friendly city

This report is Phase Three of the City Centre Plan and includes further public outreach. The City Centre planning effort interviewed stakeholders throughout the study area. Interviews included one-on-one sessions as well as group facilitated discussions. A meeting with all of the stakeholders was held in November 2012 to review initial design concepts and strategies for the City Centre Plan. The meeting included presentations of preliminary plans, survey forms, and question and answer sessions. Comments from the meeting and surveys were incorporated into this Plan. An Open House and Public Presentation was held June 2013. The presentation included the outline of the Draft Plan and allowed for public questions and commentary. The commentary was incorporated into the City Centre Plan.

## II.d The Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report: Summary of Urban Design Concerns

The Public Spaces Activity and Urban Form Report was the first phase of the City Centre Plan. The report reviewed the existing conditions of the City Centre including climate, use patterns, assets, and challenges. The following is a summary of some of the key issues found in the report:

### **LACK OF RESIDENTIAL POPULATION**

The report shows the limited extent of residential population in the Downtown. The Downtown is currently focused on business uses and the residential population is located at its periphery. Saskatoon Speaks calls for a greater mix of uses and a greater residential population in the Downtown, similar to the structure of many of Canada's leading cities.

### **PEDESTRIAN COMFORT**

Another significant feature of the City is the wide street right-of ways, of approximately 30m, that are wider than the typical downtown streets of many Canadian cities. Many streets in the Downtown devote a large portion of the right-of-way to car parking and wide traffic lanes. For pedestrians, the long crossing points are less than ideal and are proving challenging as levels of vehicular traffic increase. These are cited in the Public Spaces Activity and Urban Form Report as pedestrian network challenges. The wide streets offer an opportunity to consider the public right-of-way as an integrated design of pedestrian areas, appropriate traffic capacity, great building frontages, bike access, transit lanes, truck access, and landscaping.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The Public Spaces Activity and Urban Form Report cites the convenience of vehicular traffic in a cold climate. It also suggests that there are several roads which experience conflict between vehicles, pedestrians,

## II.D.1 PLAN OF EXISTING SURFACE PARKING IN SASKATOON



and bikes. It also suggests the Bus Mall is not highly regarded and transit options require improvement.

### LACK OF PUBLIC SPACE

There is a lack of public space in the Downtown. While the Meewasin Trail is a remarkable resource, there are few public spaces within the Downtown as compared to other cities that serve to support a growing residential population.

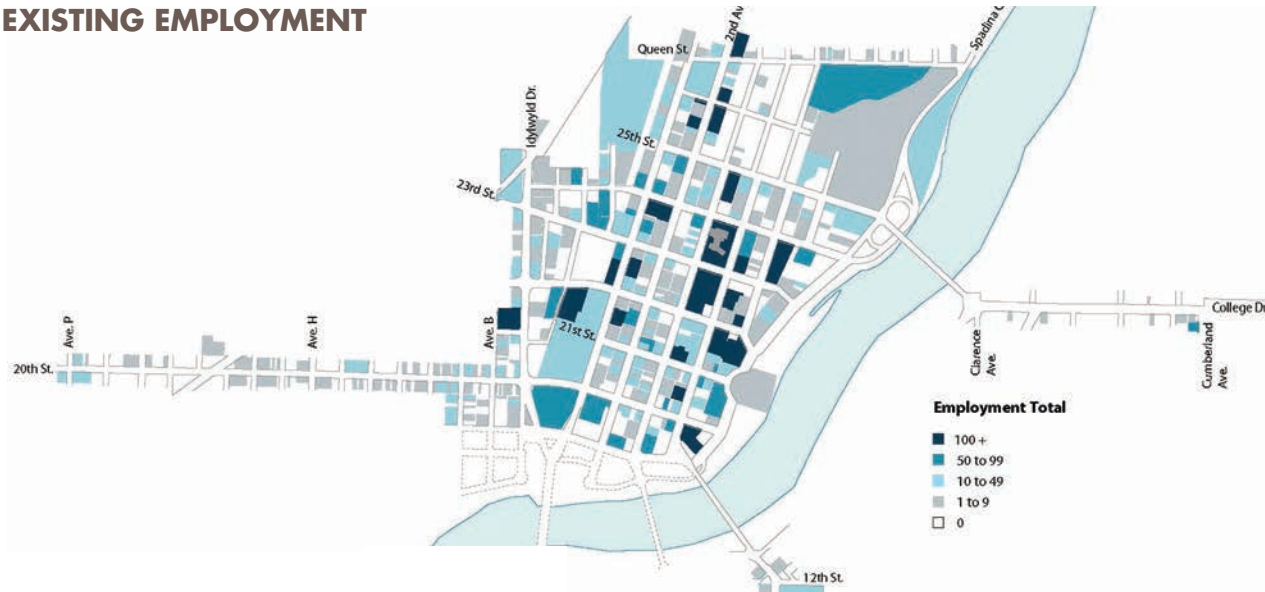
### NEUTRAL GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES

The report cites that many areas of the City Centre have neutral ground floor frontages which are inactive or have few windows or entrances. They present a challenge to a vital and active urban street.

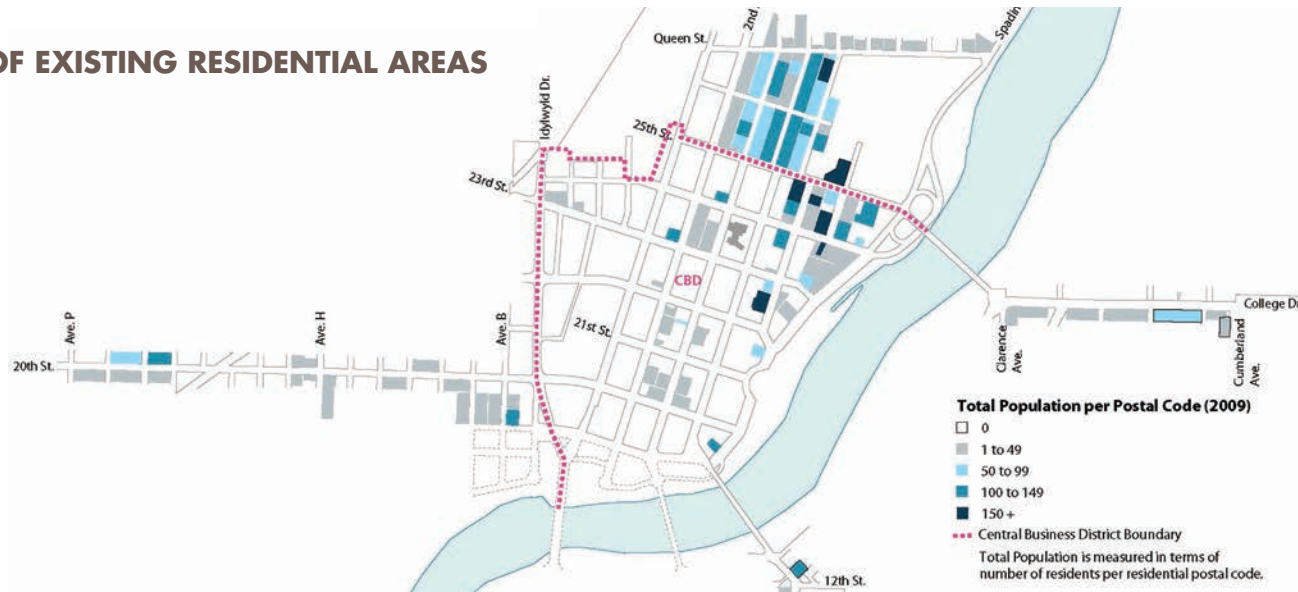
### SURFACE PARKING

One of most significant issues facing Downtown is the impact of surface parking lots. The character of the City Centre has changed over recent decades as older buildings have been demolished to create surface parking lots. Approximately 26% of the City Centre area is surface parking. This is due to current building patterns which demand larger buildings with more parking. There is an established pattern of demolishing small buildings to make room for the required surface parking. This trend could continue if further protection of existing heritage buildings and new design guidelines are not established.

## II.D.2 PLAN OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT



## II.D.3 PLAN OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS



# III. DEMOGRAPHICS &





# URBAN GROWTH

## III.a The City Grows from Market Demand

The City Centre Plan encourages growth by building upon demands from many members of the general public for urban life. The urban life of downtowns can fulfill important needs of individuals both socially and economically that other areas cannot. Opportunities for social connectivity, access to a variety of recreational opportunities, opportunities to build business with an educated workforce, and opportunities to make business connections are increasingly important. They can all be provided for in urban areas. The Plan is designed to increase growth organically and incrementally of both the residential and commercial population by targeting specific amenities that appeal to this growing market demand. The following is a discussion of the market demands and the amenities the City Centre must provide.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS AND MARKET DEMAND**

Demographic information collected by the 2011 Canadian Census indicates a growing senior population, a slight growth in younger population, and reduction in population of people in their middle years.

### **RESIDENTIAL DEMAND IN URBAN AREAS BY TWO DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS**

Two demographic groups which have a large influence on urban areas are a growing senior population and younger generations that demand the offerings of larger city centres. Members of these generations often crave social connectivity and are drawn to where it is greatest. People hunger to contribute and benefit from the collective intelligence that comes from heightened social interaction. They are in need of the

intensely interactive web of relationships urban areas offer. These groups often have small households. Future urban homes will likely be smaller, have less outdoor space to maintain, and necessitate the need for an accompanying vibrant public outdoor living room the urban areas can offer.

### **GENERATION X AND Y**

- Want to live in places with high level of social connectivity
- Want to live in places with unique experiences
- They succeed by picking up unexpected bits of knowledge from the successes and failures of those around them
- The correlation between social interaction and density is part of the reason that younger people are attracted to urban landscapes
- Require homes with little or no yard to maintain
- Have a greater percentage of singles and couples
- Their car ownership is reduced, and greater access to transit and bike lanes are required
- Want sustainable design

### **SENIORS**

- Many want to live in places where social interaction occurs
- Many desire access to cultural activities
- Many have reduced ability to drive
- They need access to community resources
- They require homes for smaller households

# THE DEMAND FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION



III.A.1 Market in New York



III.A.2 Gallery



III.A.3 Herald Square



III.A.4 Saskatoon Ice Rink

## COMMERCIAL DEMANDS

Commercial Development is attracted to areas that have the following:

### *Location Demands of Commercial Uses:*

#### Office

Area where they can obtain and retain an effective work force  
This includes a highly-trained workforce with current skills as well as experienced professionals.  
Desire to be associated with a high profile address

#### Retail

Require areas with purchasing power and access to a large region of customers

### *Facilities Demands of Commercial Uses:*

#### Office Class A Commercial offices:

Typically require floor plates of 20,000 – 25,000 square feet  
Many Class A office buildings require their own dedicated parking

#### Startups:

Affordable Lease Space

#### Retail:

Retail exists in groupings and must be adjacent to other retail

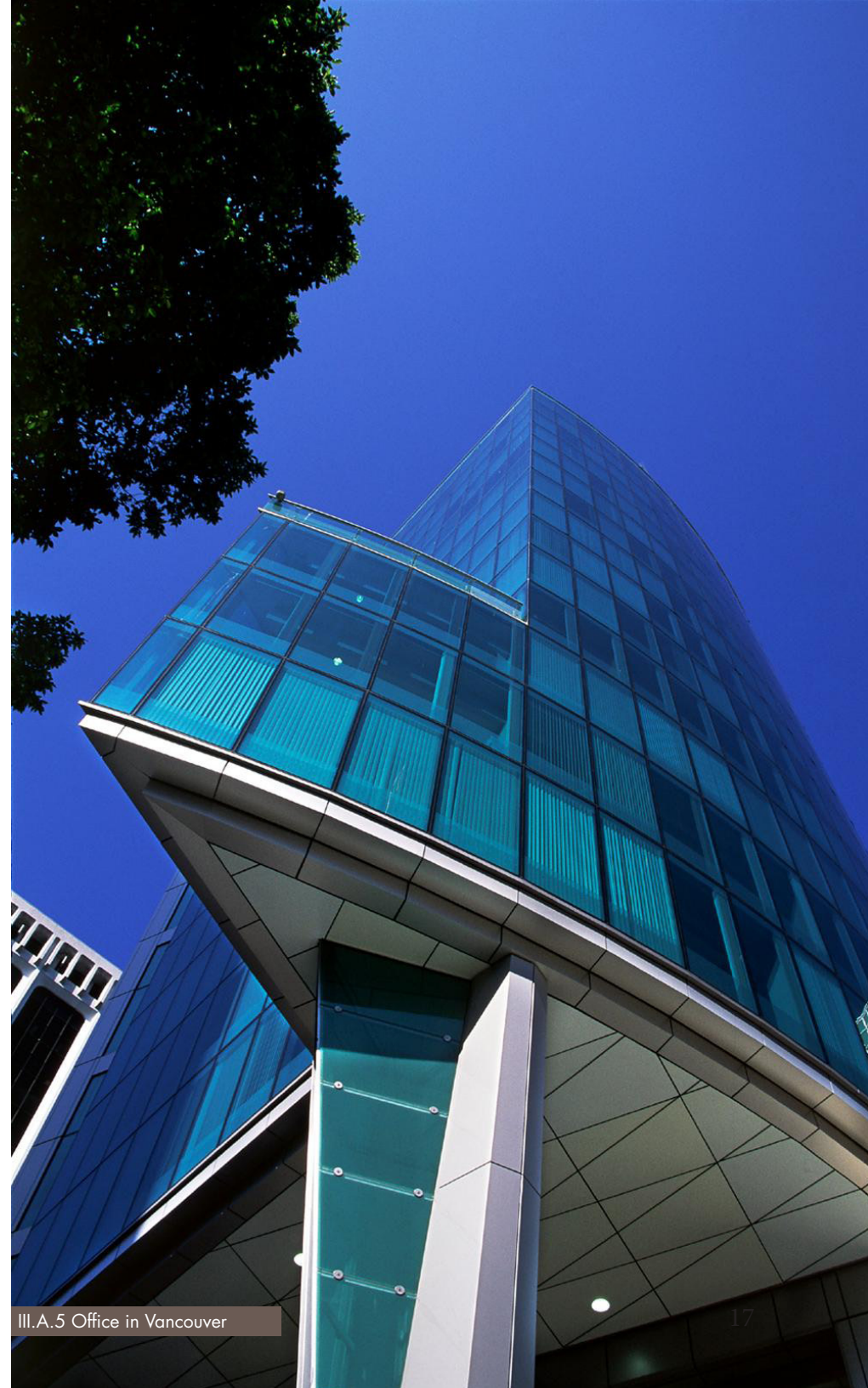
### *Access Demands of Commercial Uses:*

#### Office Class A, B, C:

Proximity to other businesses and government  
Proximity to amenities for their employees  
Accessible location for their workforce  
Access to parking when transit services are not in use

#### Retail

Generally retail requires easy access by large populations to remain competitive.



## III.b The City Centre Plan Responds to the Demands of Mixed-Use Development

In order to attract new residential and commercial uses to the City Centre, the amenities that each of these groups require must be increased. The amenities needed are listed below, and the strategies to introduce them into the City Centre are described in Chapter IV.

### **The amenities required to foster growth in the City Centre include the following:**

#### Places of Social Interaction

- Retail and eating establishments
- Public space and recreation opportunities
- Sense of neighbourhood
- Access to arts and culture
- Educational opportunities

#### Services


- High quality transit
- Government services such as Library and Education
- Grocery store, Food suppliers

#### Commercial Facilities

- Building sites of 20,000 square feet
- Incubator office space



III.B.1 BRT in Los Angeles



*“Creating viable downtown neighbourhoods requires more than just striking a balance between housing and offices. The public realm must be nurtured.”* Ken Greenberg

III.B.2 Street Retrofit in New York



# IV. THE PLAN



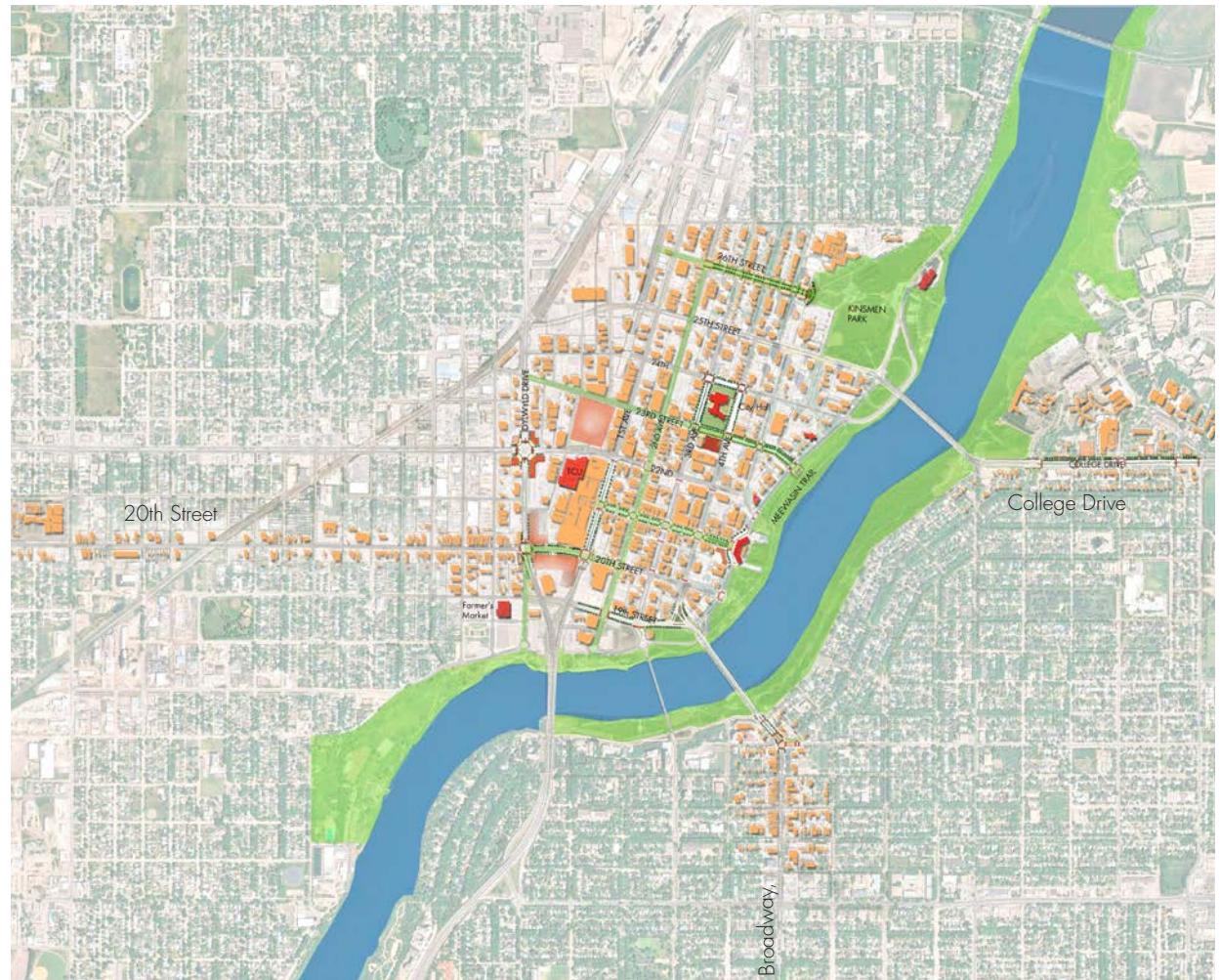
## THE PLAN

**The Vision prioritizes growth of the residential community, growth of office and other businesses, and growth of cultural resources and institutions.**

The design of the City Centre must support the needs of residents as a priority through the implementation of world class pedestrian-oriented design, high quality open space, and other amenities. To support growth of office and business uses, the Plan must facilitate ease of doing business through the inclusion of high quality public infrastructure, parking, and innovative policy. It must also create an urban environment that encourages employee retention. Support of cultural resources is essential to quality of life and should be supported by coordinated policies and support for diverse venues. There are 12 key strategies to implement these priorities.

This Chapter is divided into the following sections:

<i>12 Key Strategies</i> .....	p22
<i>A. Public Places</i> .....	p25
<i>B. Moving Around</i> .....	p64
<i>C. Policy</i> .....	p79



**IV.1 ILLUSTRATION OF OVERALL PLAN**

# 12 KEY STRATEGIES

## **1. A STRONG AND UNIQUE CITY CENTRE RETAIL AREA AS A DESTINATION FOR THE REGION**

There are already many great retail establishments in the City Centre. Increasing the breadth and variety of these businesses not only adds to the activities in the Downtown, it is an important step for attracting new residents and new commercial offices to the Downtown. Several measures including a high level of walkability, transit service, public space improvements, and parking are identified to strengthen the central retail area. This strong retail centre will play a vital role in the transformation of the City.

## **2. A NEW WEST DOWNTOWN**

The Downtown's access from the west requires passage across areas of large surface parking lots between Idylwyld Drive and 1st Avenue. The current conditions of this entry point have a negative impact on how the City is perceived. The Plan envisions that this area will become a significant area of growth as the Central Business District expands. It will include mixed-use development, new public spaces, and a pedestrian-oriented environment. Idylwyld Drive will have improved facilities for pedestrians and become a spine of economic development. These strategies will transform this back door to the Downtown into a great front door and change the perception of the entire City. They will also link the Downtown to Riversdale.

## **3. A NEW NETWORK OF PUBLIC SPACES THROUGHOUT THE CITY CENTRE TO SERVE ALL SEASONS**

One of the City's strongest assets is its extensive riverbank greenway system and Meewasin Trail. However, many of the neighborhoods of the Downtown have few or no open spaces. The Plan links the Meewasin Trail to various neighbourhoods within the City through the installation of new greenways and pedestrian priority routes. New residents will have comfortable, green walkable routes to the riverbank parks and to the various spaces within the City. A new public space is envisioned

in the vicinity of TCU Place. Public spaces in the City are designed to accommodate winter conditions and to transform throughout the seasons. Public spaces contain both summertime and wintertime uses, and extend use in the shoulder seasons through the use of micro climate strategies.

## **4. A BROAD NETWORK OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS**

The Plan seeks to create a balance between the pedestrian and other forms of transportation. Many streets in the Downtown are wide and offer great opportunities to accommodate pedestrians, vehicles, and other modes of transportation. Adjusting many of the streets to provide high quality pedestrian comfort will foster urban infill projects, greater business development, and create a more livable city. The Plan has targeted pedestrian priority improvements to 19th, 20th, 21st, 23rd and 26th Streets and 1st Avenue; portions of 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue; Idylwyld Drive; Spadina Crescent; College Drive; and Broadway that also maintain the essential vehicular access the roads provide to the City and its businesses. Greater pedestrian safety is provided along the network.

## **5. IMPROVED CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOODS**

Connecting the Downtown area to the surrounding neighborhoods of Riversdale, River Landing, Nutana, and College Drive is critical to strengthening the City Centre. The surface parking areas which dominate the western portion of the Downtown will have new mixed-use development that facilitate pedestrian activity and that will improve connections with Riversdale and Caswell Hill. Idylwyld Drive will have improved pedestrian crossings. A new linear walk and bike lane on College Drive will connect the University of Saskatchewan more directly to the University Bridge and with the Downtown. In Nutana, pedestrian improvements are proposed at the street intersections near the Broadway Bridge and at Five Corners. Long-term bridge improvements will facilitate transit, bike, and vehicular connections.



## **6. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS & CULTURE WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE**

The City has several focal points for arts and culture including Broadway Avenue, the Warehouse District, Kinsmen Park's museum area, The Remail Art Centre, The Remail Art Gallery of Saskatchewan, and Riversdale. A new public space in the vicinity of TCU Place will further foster arts in the Warehouse District. Art will be integrated throughout new development, and diverse cultural venues will be included. Heritage assets will be given further protection. Collectively these measures will establish the City Centre as a cultural district for the region.

## **7. STRONGER EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOODS**

A city is made up of many unique neighbourhoods. The differences between them create diversity and vibrancy, and establish several destinations within the City. New residential growth and mixed-use development will foster the growth of the neighbourhoods that are emerging within the City Centre. Each is made stronger by a combination of public space and use improvements that enhance their individual character. The neighbourhoods are all linked to each other by the overall Plan.

## **8. IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION, TRANSIT, BIKE, AND PARKING SYSTEMS**

Auto and truck access into the City will be prioritized on key city streets to facilitate traffic flow and reduce congestion. A Rapid Transit System is being designed as part of the Integrated Growth Plan. A potential route along 22nd Street and College Drive will provide easy access from the outlying suburbs to the City Centre and will facilitate elimination of the bus mall. New dedicated bike lanes are envisioned for several streets, and safer bike ramps at bridges are proposed. Multiple strategies are outlined to encourage construction of new parking structures throughout the Downtown. Parking strategies also include design guidelines to reduce surface parking lots and include architectural requirements for

new parking structures to blend into the built environment. Improved snow removal management facilitates both motorized and non-motorized transportation.

## **9. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**

The Plan proposes several measures to address sustainability. Increased long-term use of transit, bike lanes, and walkable streets will reduce energy consumption and lower carbon emissions. On City Centre streets and in major infrastructure, new sustainable stormwater clean treatment practices will be incorporated throughout. In the long-term street lighting may be converted to low energy consumption fixtures. Trash recycling in the City should continually be reviewed and enhanced. Given that the majority of energy and water use occurs within buildings, the City Centre Plan recommends the Building Bylaw be reviewed and amended to improve thermal, lighting, water and energy efficiency standards. The codes should also be reviewed to accommodate and encourage sustainable features such as green roofs, solar energy sources, and water conservation technologies. Investment in adaptive reuse of existing buildings should be encouraged. Municipal facilities may also be reviewed for increased implementation of green building practices.

## **10. CITY POLICIES TO FOSTER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INVESTMENT**

Policies that impact private development are critical to the overall vitality and character of the City. The Plan is designed to allow the large majority of the City Centre growth to come from private investment. Policies are flexible enough to encourage and expedite appropriate private development. One essential policy is the design guidelines. The design guidelines focus on building placement and overall building shape in order to create a pedestrian-oriented environment. They allow private development flexibility while protecting the essential walkable character of each street. The list of heritage buildings will be increased and be integrated into the overall growth of the City. The overall Plan is designed to use market forces to build new residential and office

uses within the City Centre area. Public investment in the City that, in turn, fosters private investment is a critical part of the Plan. Carefully measured investments in programs that foster residential uses, office uses, parking structures, transit, streets, and key infrastructure will allow the City Centre to attract private investment and provide a significant portion of the City's revenue. City policies must also encourage transit-oriented growth in more distant areas beyond the City Centre area and reduce new auto-oriented infrastructure in remote areas.

### **11. RESIDENTS ARE A PRIORITY**

Encouraging growth of residential uses in the City Centre is a priority. The Plan is designed to attract residential development by creating market demand. The design of the City Centre Plan serves the needs of the existing and future residential population by placing importance on pedestrian-oriented design and activities, high quality open space, and community resources. Facilities that serve commuters such as parking must be provided for; however, the Plan reduces the prominence and extent of surface parking and other non-pedestrian-oriented land uses. A Downtown Community Association may be formed to support the resident's needs.

### **12. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IS A PRIORITY**

The Plan establishes the City Centre as a regional destination for business. Commercial development that will serve a range of uses, from emerging innovative businesses to nationally established offices, are supported in the Plan by multiple strategies. Parking strategies will encourage the construction of more structured parking facilities for the businesses. More amenities in the City Centre will encourage employee retention and offer places for people to conduct business such as hotels, restaurants, and informal gathering places. Financial incentives will support both office development and new structured parking.



# IV.A PUBLIC PLACES

## IV.A Public Places

### A.1 Framework Plans

#### A.2 Walkable Development Framework Plan

#### A.3 Open Space Framework Plan

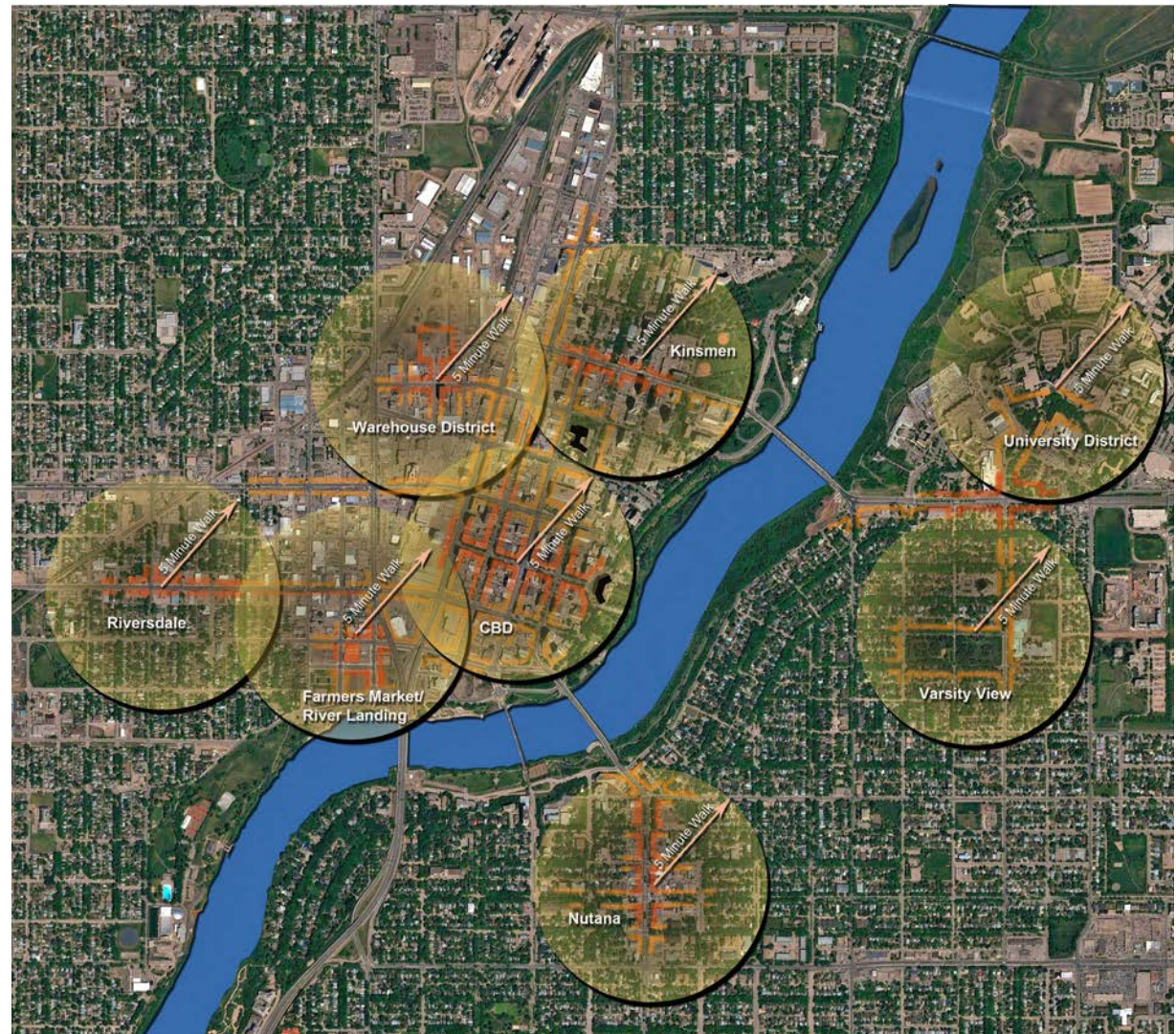
#### A.4 Potential Growth & Land Use

#### A.5 Safety

#### A.6 The Neighbourhood Plans

## A.1 The Framework Plans

One of the key assets of any city is its neighbourhoods. Their variety and unique individual characteristics provide the vitality that is essential to any city. A neighbourhood is a place where people live, but also includes a mix of uses. They allow for diversity in housing types, culture, income, and uses. There are several neighbourhoods emerging within the City Centre and as new residents move in, their strength will be of increasing importance. The Plan places priority on residents and therefore on the neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood framework plan describes the location of these through an analysis of key places, landmarks, and 5-minute walking distance radiuses. The neighbourhoods have a series of consistent physical design characteristics and an identified centre such as a public space or building. They



IV.A.1 Neighbourhood Framework Plan: Saskatoon as a series of 5 minute walking distance neighbourhoods both existing and emerging

have a limited size of a 5-minute walking distance radius (400m) from the centre to the edges. The 5-minute walk radius is a naturally occurring measurement found in healthy neighbourhoods all over the world.

In Saskatoon, the emerging neighbourhoods include the Central Business District, which centers around 21st Street. An adjacent neighbourhood is emerging around the City Hall Square. The southern portion of City Park adjacent to Kinsmen Park is also emerging as a distinct neighbourhood. The Warehouse District is already well known and will be a significant node for growth. The Farmer's Market is the centre of the emerging River Landing neighbourhood. Further from the Downtown are the neighbourhoods of Nutana, Riversdale, and Varsity View adjacent to College Drive. The framework plans are designed to give strength to each neighbourhood. New public spaces are established within each where possible. New pedestrian priority street improvements associated with these public spaces strengthen the unique identity and livability of each. The framework plans connect all the neighborhoods to a larger city-wide network of walkable streets and public spaces. The Walkable Development Framework Plan and new Open Space Framework Plan are tightly interconnected with the neighbourhood framework plan.

## A.2 Walkable Development Framework Plan

The historic street grid of Saskatoon was designed to allow interconnectivity between various portions of the City. It allows a basic level of walkable connections. The 30m wide rights-of-way accommodate critical auto, transit, and truck circulation, but can be less than ideal in many places for pedestrians. Saskatoon Speaks and the City's Culture Plan call for enhanced streetscapes, greater pedestrian interconnectivity, and a linked network of places. Saskatoon Speaks also calls for long-term planning that reduces congestion and auto-dependent

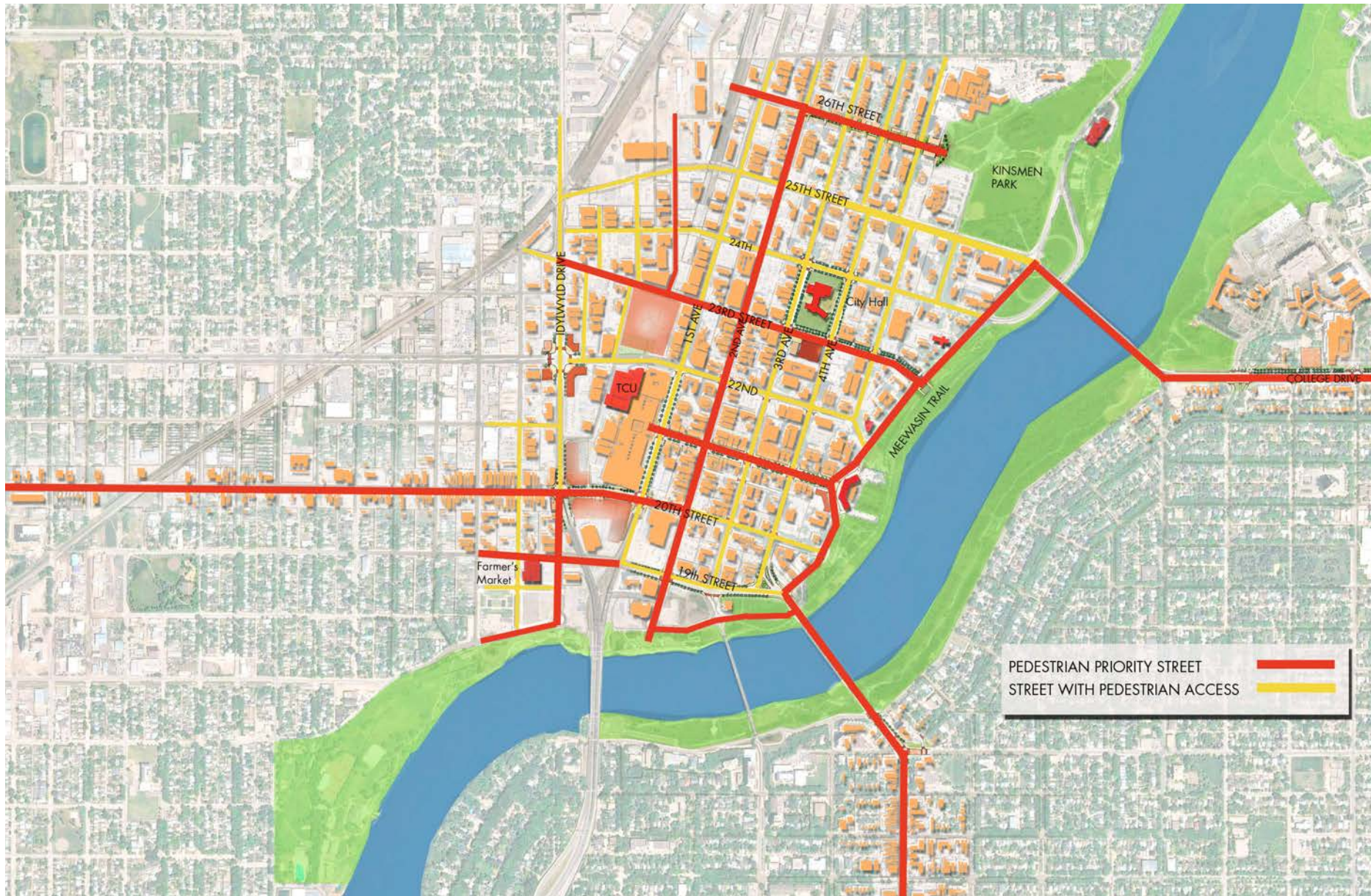
travel as the City grows. It calls for the introduction of mixed-use infill development and improved access to transit. All of these goals are highly dependent upon improved pedestrian connectivity.

Economic development is often supported by walkable environments. Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal are Canadian cities with the highest level of walkability and economically successful urban centres. Other successful northern cities including Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Oslo also have highly walkable mixed-use urban centres. In addition to these cities, several studies show that walkable streets produce higher retail sales and higher residential home values.

The Plan balances critical vehicular access with a high quality pedestrian network. All streets should be walkable to an extent, and all streets should allow for vehicular access. A walkable street is not a street that eliminates cars or trucks, but one that provides balance between pedestrians and vehicles. The Plan proposes a hierarchy of streets in which some streets become pedestrian priority streets to promote economic development, place making, and enhancing neighbourhood identity while accommodating vehicles. Other streets and thoroughfares, may handle higher volumes of traffic, transit, and truck access while also allowing for safe pedestrian crossings.

The Walkable Development Framework Plan builds upon 2nd Avenue as one of the Downtown's primary north-south pedestrian priority streets. It is already a successful avenue partially because it accommodates pedestrians with reduced street width crossing points, mid-block crossing areas, and landscape. The Plan recommends this pedestrian priority street be extended on both its northern and southern ends in order to fully connect the major neighbourhoods of the Downtown including City Park, the City Hall Square area, the Central Business District, and the waterfront of River Landing

The Plan establishes several additional east-west pedestrian priority streets perpendicular to 2nd Avenue. These create strong



IV.A.2.1 The Walkable Development Framework Plan

linkages between the Meewasin Trail, 2nd Avenue, and the various neighbourhoods. These pedestrian priority streets include 26th, 23rd, 21st, 20th, and 19th Streets. Collectively, these improvements create a network of pedestrian priority streets that tie the entire Downtown together, greatly enhance the basic walkable elements of Downtown that already exist, and create a vibrant Downtown. These priority walkable areas will reinforce demand for infill mixed-use and transit-oriented development sites throughout the City Centre as they have done in other Canadian cities. Over the long term, additional streets throughout the area should be made more walkable to support the overall development framework.

### **A NEW WEST DOWNTOWN**

Connecting the Downtown to areas west and south of the City Centre such as Riversdale, Caswell Hill, and River Landing is critical. As part of the linkage strategy, the western portion of Downtown between Idylwyld Drive and 1st Avenue is envisioned as a significant growth area for mixed-use development. It comprises the Warehouse District and the area between Midtown Plaza and River Landing. The surface parking lots that dominate the area will be transformed into new pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development and public spaces. Idylwyld Drive will be transformed into a street with greater pedestrian facilities.

### **IMPROVED CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOODS**

Additional improved connections are proposed for Broadway Avenue in Nutana and the College Drive area. College Drive has the significant presence of the University of Saskatchewan. It is a wide street that is challenging to cross. The Plan recommends creation of a long park-like walk and associated bike lane that will connect the University directly to the University Bridge and with the Downtown. Improved crosswalks at College Drive are also recommended. On Broadway Avenue in Nutana, pedestrian improvements are proposed at the street intersections near the Broadway Bridge to facilitate crossing the bridge and crossing Broadway. This will improve the linkage of Nutana to the Downtown.

## **A.3 Open Space Framework Plan**

Two of the City's greatest assets are the South Saskatchewan River and the riverbank parks along its edges. The many varied amenities, spaces, and greenways along the riverbank provide a remarkable series of outdoor activities. The development of River Landing on the south shoreline of the Downtown will enhance these activities. In contrast, the Downtown itself has few park spaces. The Walkable Development Framework Plan envisions that several streets be transformed into linear green pedestrian priority streets that connect the riverbank parks directly to the neighbourhoods of the Downtown.

As an example, 23rd Street can accommodate a linear green walk along one side to connect the City Hall Square directly to the riverbank park system. The City Hall Square area can be augmented by introducing green landscape elements on both sides of the adjacent streets. This will make City Hall Square seem larger and more integrated within the City.

A new public plaza is proposed in the vicinity of TCU Place. This new plaza will be a major gateway to the City, an important resource for the 25,000 new residents and new businesses that will occupy the City Centre, and serve the long-term population growth to 500,000. It will also enhance the TCU area as a significant hub of arts and culture.

### **COLD CLIMATE PROVISIONS**

The Plan creates a city for all seasons. A series of designs and policies are included to mitigate the cold. They will allow for enjoyment of the warmer seasons and increased shelter during the colder seasons. A summary of these provisions is included on the following page. Several specific design recommendations are included in Chapter IV.A.6 for CBD/21st Street and throughout the document.

## COLD CLIMATE PROVISIONS

The Plan creates a City for all seasons. Design guidelines include provisions for canopies on new buildings that extend over the sidewalks in order to reduce snow accumulation and help block wind. Step-backs on new buildings will deflect cold winter winds that blow down onto pedestrians from above. Ground level wind screening devices including evergreens and movable wind screens will also protect pedestrians. Heated sidewalks are proposed in selected locations as well as heated bus shelters. Improved snow removal management will facilitate movement.

The Plan also is designed to celebrate the colder months. Nighttime light displays will add colour throughout the longer nights of the winter season. Both 21st Street and the new public plaza at 22nd Street are envisioned to transform in use and design throughout the seasons. They will allow for enjoyment of the warmer seasons and increased shelter during the colder seasons. Outdoor fireplaces and snow parks, a potential additional outdoor ice rink, and places for snow sculptures will enliven the City Centre. Specific design recommendations are included in Chapter IV.A.6 for CBD/21st Street.

### IV.A.3.1 Saskatoon River Front

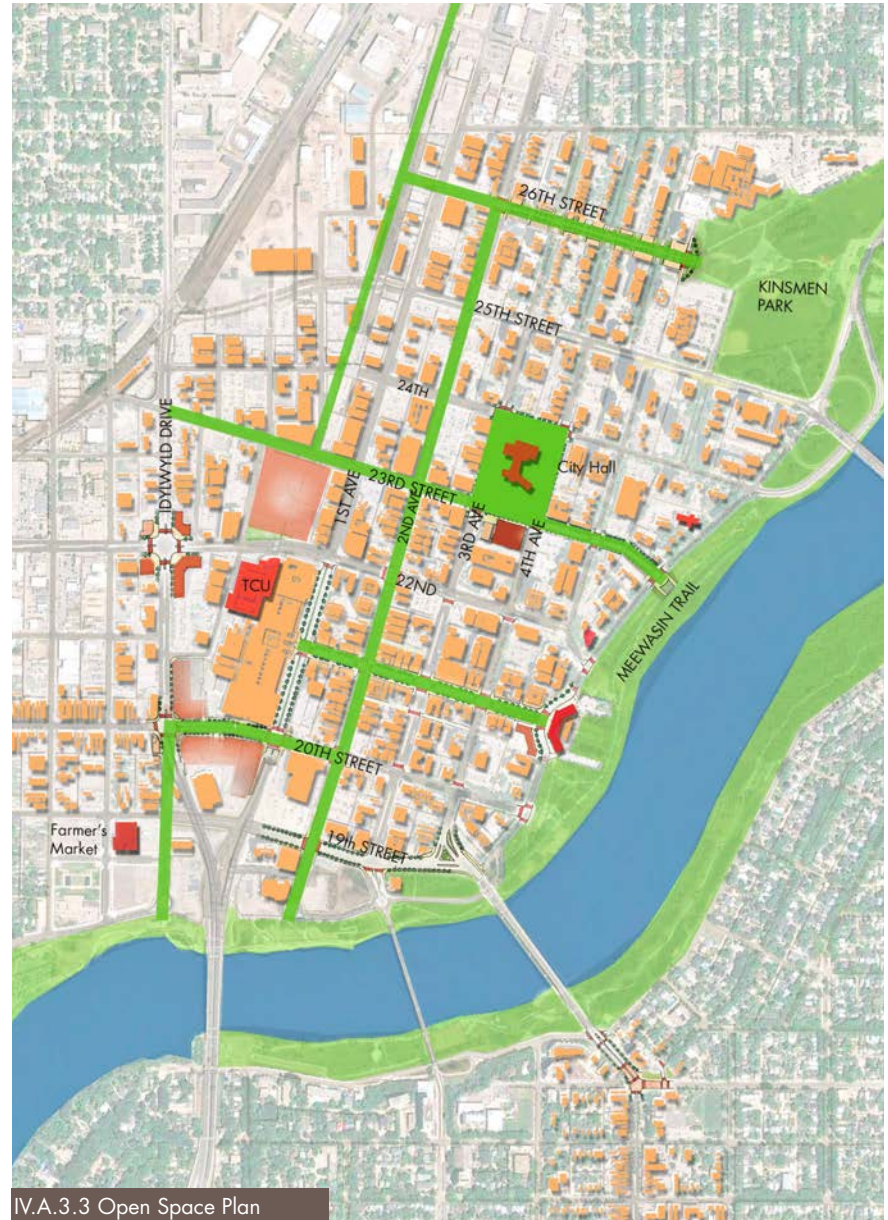


## GENERAL STREETScape

General streetscape standards will include installation of low evergreens to provide colour throughout the year. The green pedestrian priority routes to the Meewasin Trail may accommodate sustainable stormwater rain gardens that clean contaminants in storm runoff from roads using natural methods. Rain gardens are described in Chapter IV.B.8. Permanent installations as well as temporary installations of large potted evergreen plants are encouraged. WiFi services may be augmented in key public places.

## SPADINA CRESCENT

The Plan also proposes improving the public space along Spadina Crescent. This street is the face of the City to the Meewasin Trail and is a principle feature of the City. New landscape frontage standards along Spadina Crescent should reflect its important role in the City. Cafes and outdoor seating areas might be encouraged in the front yards, while new landscape edges of the front yards will add greater definition of public space and grandeur.



IV.A.3.3 Open Space Plan



IV.A.3.2 Existing Open Space



## A.4 Potential Growth & Land Use

The City Centre is anticipated to experience growth of 35,000 residents over the coming decades. Since the Plan fosters growth through market demand, increases in occupants will come organically and incrementally for both the residential and commercial uses. The City Centre has 415,000 square metres of surface parking not including North Downtown. The surface parking lots alone could accommodate 2,075,000 square metres of development at an average of 5 stories tall. This capacity could be comprised of 18,000 to 20,000 dwellings. If 50% of the growth is commercial uses, there would be approximately 1,000,000 square metres of commercial uses and approximately 9,000 new dwellings.

The western portion of the Downtown, between 1st Avenue and Idylwyld Drive, holds several large potential development sites in close proximity to the Central Business District (CBD). The Plan anticipates that this area will develop as a mixed-use walkable area. Uses may include retail, office, and multifamily residential. Areas immediately north and south of Midtown Plaza could be key nodes of growth.

The central portion of the Downtown, which includes the CBD and the area around City Hall, will experience more discrete development projects on scattered vacant sites as well as on existing building sites. Mixed-use development including multifamily residential, office, and retail are permitted and recommended throughout.

The northern portions of the Downtown including areas of City Park will remain largely residential in character with discrete commercial establishments.



IV.A.4.1 Land Use Plan

Types of Growth and Land Use

## A.5 Safety

Safety concerns must be addressed to encourage growth of the City Centre. The Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report discusses issues of safety. The Plan provides several measures to improve safety. Design guidelines for the City will require buildings to face the street and incorporate minimum areas of transparent openings. This will provide “eyes on the street” and allow local neighbours to monitor the activities of each neighbourhood. This is consistent with the Official Community Plan and principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Specific areas of the Plan that have a reputation for safety issues such as the bus mall have proposed design changes. Building out of surface parking lots and other areas that are difficult to monitor will improve safety. New sustainable street lighting with energy efficient fixtures is also proposed to improve visibility. Pedestrian improvements for street crossings will improve pedestrian safety.

## A.6 The Neighbourhood Plans

The Framework Plans provide an overview of the entire City Centre area. The following section discusses each of the neighbourhoods and areas that shape the City Centre. The neighbourhoods of the Downtown include the Central Business District, the City Hall Square area, the Warehouse District, the area of City Park south of Queen Street, and the River Landing area. Important neighbourhoods directly adjacent to the Downtown and that complete the City Centre area include Riversdale, the communities surrounding College Drive, and Nutana’s Broadway Avenue. Recommendations for each neighbourhood are described in the following sections.

### Index of Neighbourhood Plans

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## CBD/ 21st Street

21st Street is the City's historic central spine. The city's most significant landmarks lie at either end. The former train station, now Midtown Plaza, is at the west end of the retail street and the historic Delta Bessborough Hotel is within short walking distance at the opposing end. The Downtown's other major concentration for retail in the area is 2nd Avenue. The area also includes many of the City's historic buildings.

While there are already many great retail establishments in the Downtown, increasing the breadth and variety of these businesses will not only add to the activities in the Downtown, but will be a critical step to attracting new residents, as well as an educated workforce, and new commercial offices. The Canadian Census shows youth and young professionals moving to larger urban centres because of urban amenities such as retail and places of social interaction.

Saskatoon may model its retail growth on other examples of successful urban retail destinations. Examples include the major retail streets of Stockholm, Toronto, Santana Row, Halifax, and Montreal. In these areas, retail is somewhat concentrated on a few key streets that provide seamless pedestrian environments. The opportunities for social interaction and entertainment make them more than basic shopping places, they are destinations. Their pedestrian priority design is an essential ingredient to their success. Clear crosswalks, short street crossing distances, outdoor heated dining areas, and small public plazas are common in many of them.

The retail development in Downtown Saskatoon has aspects of these successful streets. The Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report documents the high level of pedestrian activity at 21st Street and 2nd Avenue, where some of these physical improvements have already been made. The retail area could become more successful and succeed in attracting a larger population if further pedestrian-oriented improvements were made. Currently, the retail development in the area is somewhat fragmented by impediments to pedestrian crossings at the



Streets in the area are challenging to cross



## CBD/ 21st Street

avenues and by limited high-quality outdoor spaces. The proposed Plan recommends improved pedestrian linkages between the Midtown Plaza across 1st Avenue and along 21st Street to the riverbank parks. These improvements will allow the retail establishments to better reinforce each other and function seamlessly as a regional destination. This interconnected strategy offers retail opportunities for all seasons, benefits both Midtown Plaza and 21st Street merchants, and is consistent with the best practices of retail planning.

During the warmer months, the outdoor street environment is an asset that should be exploited to the maximum extent possible. This type of outdoor public space attracts many demographic groups and will elevate the City's profile in the region. As recommended in The Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report, a portion of the surface parking spaces in front of current eating establishments will be converted to outdoor dining in the summer, and then returned back to parking in the winter. Several cities including New York and Halifax have shown a definite increase in retail business in the areas around these types of converted seating areas.

The redevelopment of the vacant parking lot at the corner of Spadina Crescent and 21st Street should be a priority site for redevelopment. Redevelopment of this key site will support the retail and commercial uses at street level and patronage of the new 21st street public amenity.



IV.A.6.3 Stockholm

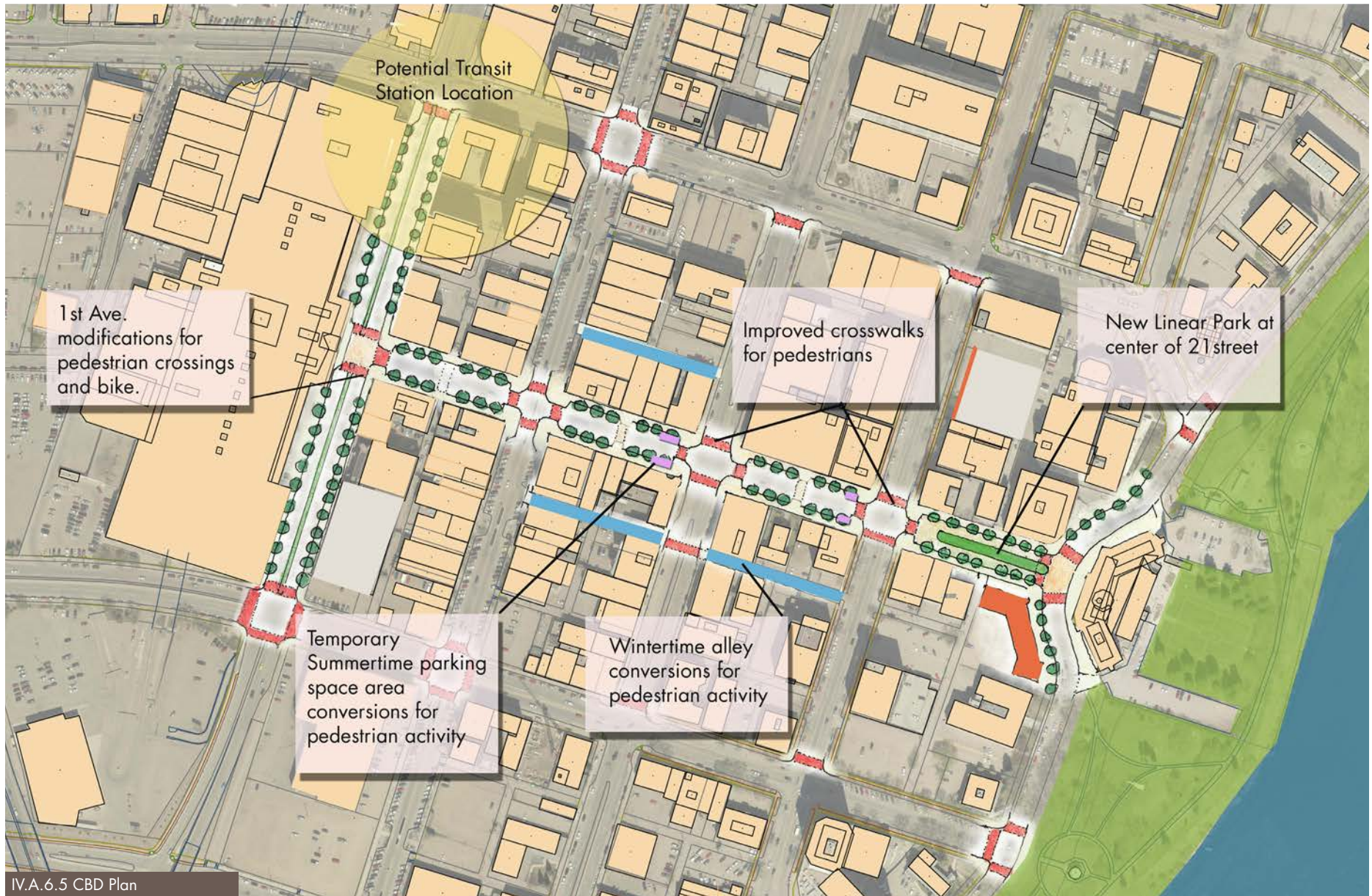
Stockholm has pedestrian priority streets in its retail areas.

Mid-street park at highly successful Herald Square is 8 metres wide at points



IV.A.6.4 Herald Square

## CBD/ 21st Street



# CBD/ 21ST STREET

A significant new feature is a linear park on 21st street. The linear green space is wide enough to include tables and chairs, small vendor services, snow sculptures, ornamental plantings, night-scaping displays, and also be a celebratory location for civic art. It elevates one of the City's most important streets into a public landmark that rivals the most significant and elegant public spaces of Canada. It celebrates the historic structures of the area including the Delta Bessborough Hotel while supporting pedestrian-oriented retail uses. With only a moderate level of capital cost, it creates a signature regional destination. In the winter, it could accommodate winter festivals, ice sculptures, and elaborate lighting displays, while portions of it could be designated for snow removal storage. The improvements required could be introduced in phases with only a portion of the linear park and a portion of the outdoor seating initiated in the first phase. The 20 parking spaces that are required to be relocated for the new park will be moved to new structured parking facilities in the vicinity.

In the wintertime and shoulder seasons the rear lanes adjacent to 21st Street, which are shielded from wind, will be converted to public walkways. Night light scaping and heat lamps during portions of the year could make these more comfortable and increase the crowds that already visit the area. An urban fireplace may be included. This strong retail centre will play a vital role in the transformation of the City.

Other improvements in the area that support local businesses include a new Rapid Transit station in the vicinity, programs to create new parking structures, new dedicated bike lane improvements, increased protection of heritage buildings, and new design guidelines.





IV.A.6.7 New linear park at 21st Street in front of Bessborough

# THE CITY THROUGH THE SEASONS



IV.A.6.8 Broadway, NYC

Example of converted roadway with paint and potted plants.



IV.A.6.9 San Jose CA

## CBD/ 21st Street: Summertime



IV.A.6.10 21st Street

### Temporary Summertime Alterations of Parking and Pedestrian Uses

A small portion of parking spaces on 21st Street can be converted on a temporary basis for installations of tables, chairs, and cafes to maximize visitation during June to September. The areas return to parking use during colder months when there is greater need to park close to the final destination.



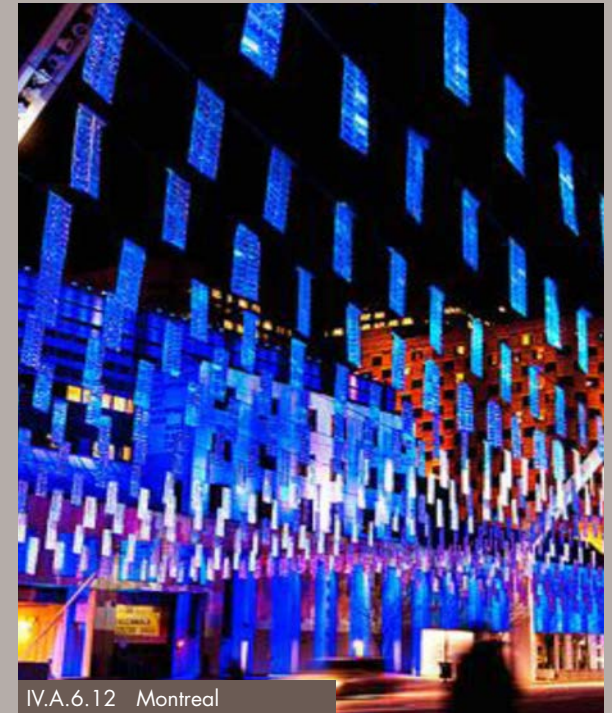
## CBD/ 21st Street: Wintertime



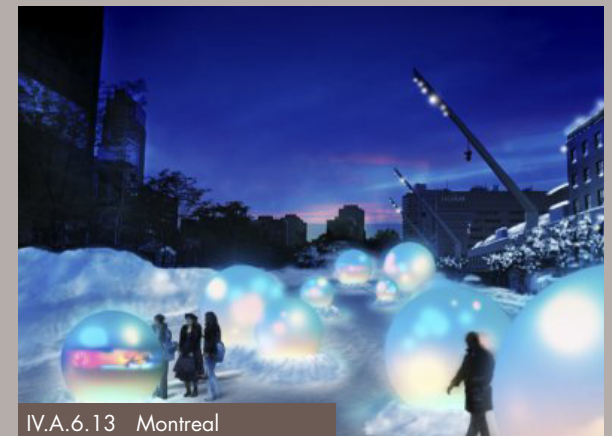
IV.A.6.11 Lane Way Design

### Wintertime Use of Laneways and Outdoor Lighting

Wintertime Laneway conversions for pedestrian use are shielded from cold wind. Conversions will require shifting all garbage containers to designated locations. These could eventually become year-long pedestrian places. Lighting displays in winter can compensate for shortened hours of daylight. Urban fireplaces can add vitality in the winter.



IV.A.6.12 Montreal



IV.A.6.13 Montreal

## City Hall Square Area

The City Hall and its square are important landmarks within the City. The City Hall Square has been cited in the Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report as somewhat passive in its use and underutilized. One of the primary challenges to the park is its disconnection with the rest of the City. It is surrounded by wide expanses of asphalt that are unwelcoming and intimidating to cross. The proposed solution includes installation of park elements on the opposing sides of the streets from the park. The strategy will allow the park to become an entire precinct that is larger and more inclusive. Improvements on 3rd Ave will extend to 25th.

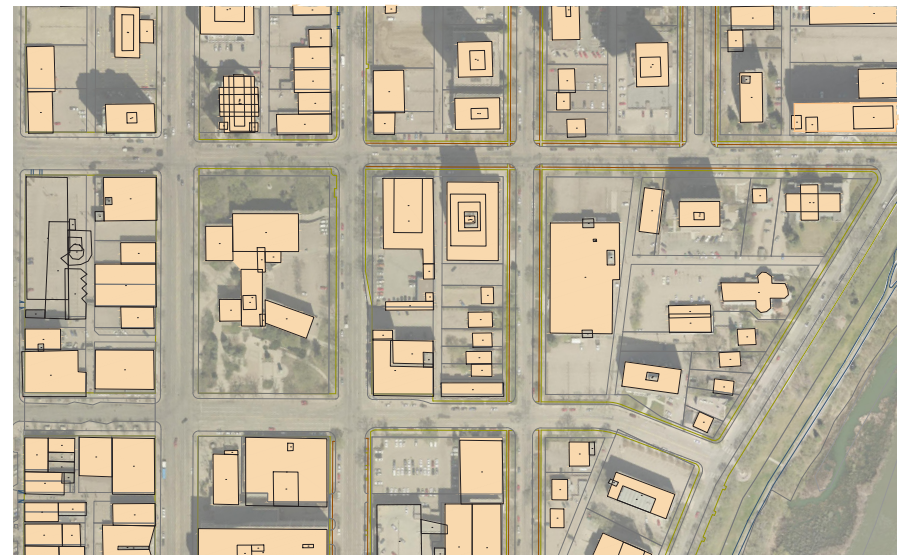
Two principal civic uses of the area, the Library and City Hall, will be more connected to their physical surroundings and to the City with these improvements. In the long-term the Library may incorporate a new interior public space that offers an important wintertime destination and counterpart to City Hall Square. The Library may become a major facility for learning, and social interaction.

The Plan recommends 23rd Street be enhanced with a linear greenway that links City Hall and the Library, to the Meewasin Trail. It would become an important public street that would tie two of the City's most important public spaces together. The greenway would be created by a small reduction of the width of the roadway. The greenway would accommodate civic art, dual rows of trees, rain gardens, evergreen and resilient plantings, and benches. The greenway would terminate in a grand new entrance to the riverbank park system. It might also be continued west in a more limited form to Idylwyld Drive. The greenway could be initiated with temporary measures similar to New York City street interventions discussed in Chapter IV.B.8 and then built in a more permanent manner over time.

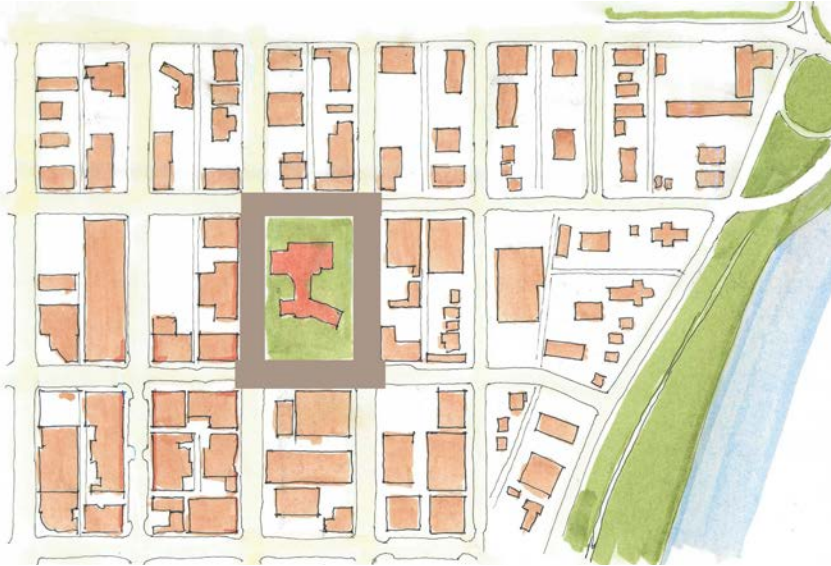
Other area improvements include elimination of the bus mall, a new rapid transit stop, dedicated bike lanes along 24th Street and 4th Avenue, and design guidelines.



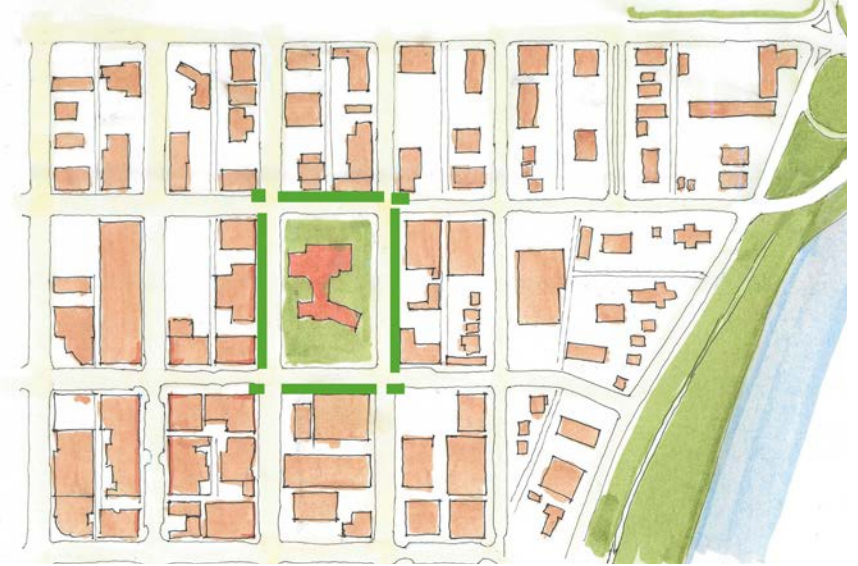
Large expanses of paving around City Hall Square



## City Hall Square Area



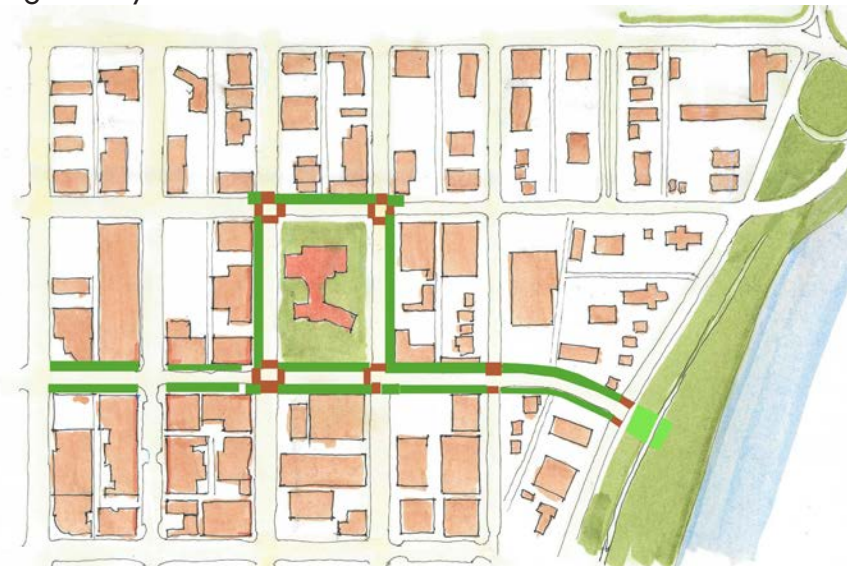
IV.A.6.15 Existing City Hall Square is surrounded by large expanses of asphalt



16. City Hall Square expanded using both sides of streets for greenery



17. Connection of City Hall Square to Meewasin Trail with greenway



18. Extension of greenway along 23rd street, elimination of the Bus Mall and re-open 23rd street

# CITY HALL SQUARE



IV.A.6.19 23rd Street



IV.A.6.20 Proposed 23rd St

23rd Street with expanded landscape of City Hall Square Precinct

## City Hall Square Area





IV.A.6.22 View of 23rd Street toward Meewasin Trail. 23rd Street will be a civic spine with a linear park, public art, and benches. It will connect the riverfront to City Hall Square.

## Warehouse District

The Warehouse District is one of the neighbourhoods in the “New West Downtown.” The Public Spaces, Activity and Urban Form Report describes the area as having extensive parking lots that cut the Downtown off from other portions of the City. This existing entry point to the Downtown has a negative impact on how the City is perceived. The Plan transforms it into a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use area. Its open parking lots will be one of the primary areas of growth as 15,000 new residents as well as new businesses move into the Downtown. While the area is moderately developed at present, the new growth will substantially change the area, and new public spaces will be required. Growth of the overall City to 500,000 may also demand more of the Downtown public spaces. To respond to the growth, a new urban plaza is proposed for the area. The new public plaza will accommodate outdoor dining, tables and chairs in the summer and transform to accommodate winter uses. It may also provide opportunities to expand TCU Place as a hub for the arts as additional venues are needed to accommodate the city’s growth. A pedestrian passage along the path of the old C&O rail line will connect the the Warehouse District to North Downtown. Idylwyld Drive will be transformed into a boulevard with several sites for long-term economic development and high quality accommodations for pedestrians. The historic character of the warehouse buildings will be encouraged to be maintained with the provision of new design guidelines.



Diagram from Public Spaces Report showing locations of poor ground level environment that include portions of Warehouse District

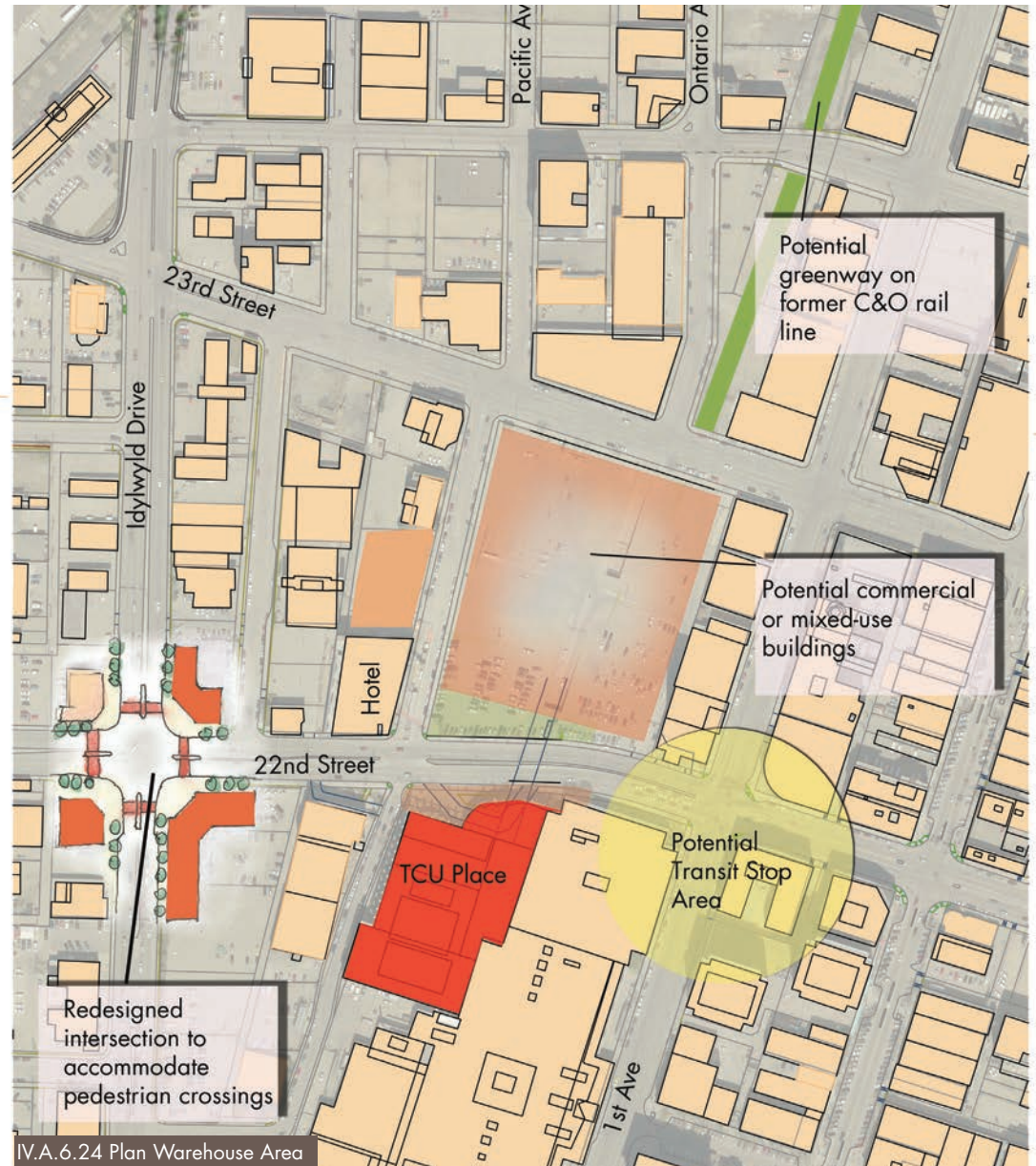


## Warehouse District



Existing Site Plan

Note, the plans indicate potential development on privately owned land. At this time, the plans have not been reviewed by the owners and are conjectural only.



IV.A.6.24 Plan Warehouse Area

# Warehouse District



IV.A.6.25 Public Plaza



IV.A.6.26 Columbia Heights, DC



IV.A.6.27 Pearl Street Mall



IV.A.6.28 NYC Warehouse Area

Potential Activities: Ice skating in the winter

Potential Activities: Outdoor dining in the summer



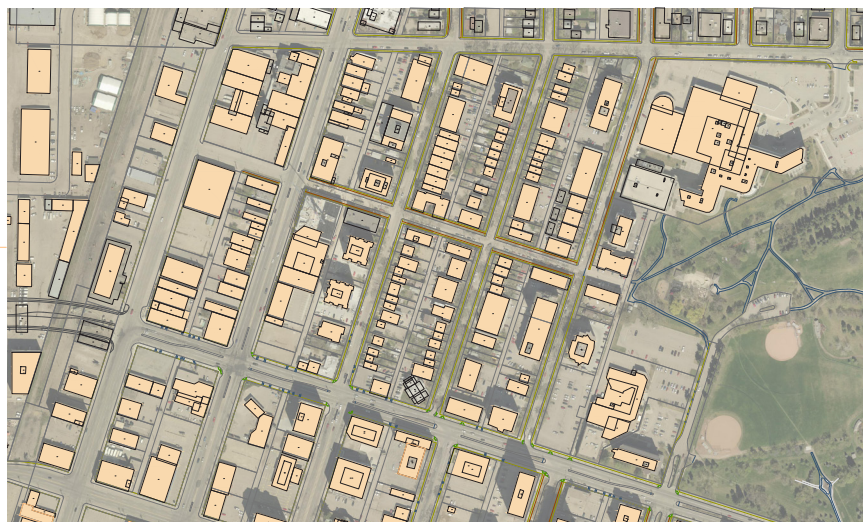
IV.A.6.29 New Public Plaza

## City Park South of Queen

The City Park area south of Queen Street is a significant residential area of the Downtown. The old trees and narrow streets are a good support for residential use. However, building types in the area ranging from small bungalows to tall apartment buildings lack a consistent character. In order to establish a stronger identity for this area, a new neighbourhood focal point is proposed. 26th Street, which extends from 2nd Avenue to Kinsmen Park is proposed as a central green pedestrian priority street for the area. A new grand park entrance will be established at Kinsmen Park, tying the entire neighbourhood to this important natural asset. The pedestrian priority street will extend west to the North Downtown area. The City Park Local Area Plan of 2010 expresses a goal that future development is sensitive to existing patterns. In response, design guidelines will require that new tall buildings have height step-backs in order to complement the heights of the older low scale buildings and to enhance the pedestrian experience.



### Existing Plan



## City Park South of Queen



Above: Detail plan of new Kinsmen Park Entrance with redistributed parking, new trees, new security lighting, new paving, and gateway sculptures.

Left: Plan of 26th Street improvements that connect the neighbourhood to Kinsmen Park.

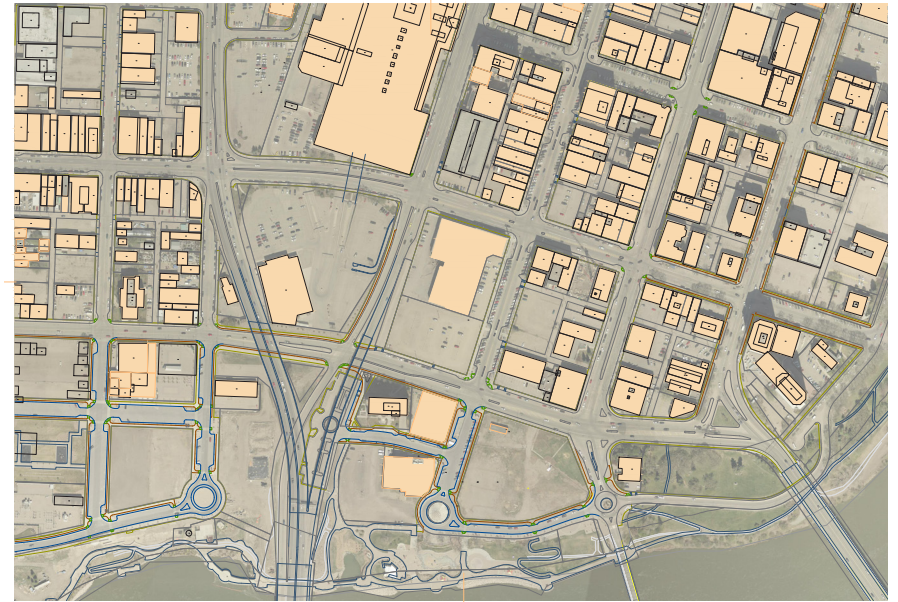
## North of River Landing

The area includes lands located south of 20th Street and north of River Landing. River Landing will ultimately become its own neighbourhood with the Farmer's Market as its centre. While it is within a 5-minute walk of the Central Business District and 21st Street, it is difficult to walk from one to the other. It is also difficult to walk from the Central Business District to Riversdale due to the current design of Idylwyld Drive.

The Plan proposes Idylwyld Drive be modified into a boulevard design with high quality pedestrian amenities including improved sidewalks and safe crosswalks. It also proposes transforming 20th Street and 1st Avenue in the area with high quality pedestrian and bike features. Together these adjustments allow comfortable walks and easy linkages between River Landing, the Central Business District, and Riversdale. There are no proposed changes to River Landing itself.

Other improvements in the area include 2nd Avenue pedestrian connections to the riverfront. 19th Street in the area provides an important front of the City to the South Saskatchewan River. The street should have a planting program to introduce trees similar to those on Spadina Crescent. The intersection of Broadway Bridge with 4th Avenue and 19th Street requires significant improvement as a gateway to the City. Studies by the City of Saskatoon envision expanded medians and revised traffic turning lanes to accommodate improved pedestrian and bike circulation.

Note, the plans indicate potential development on privately owned land. At this time, the plans have not been reviewed by the owners and are conjectural only.

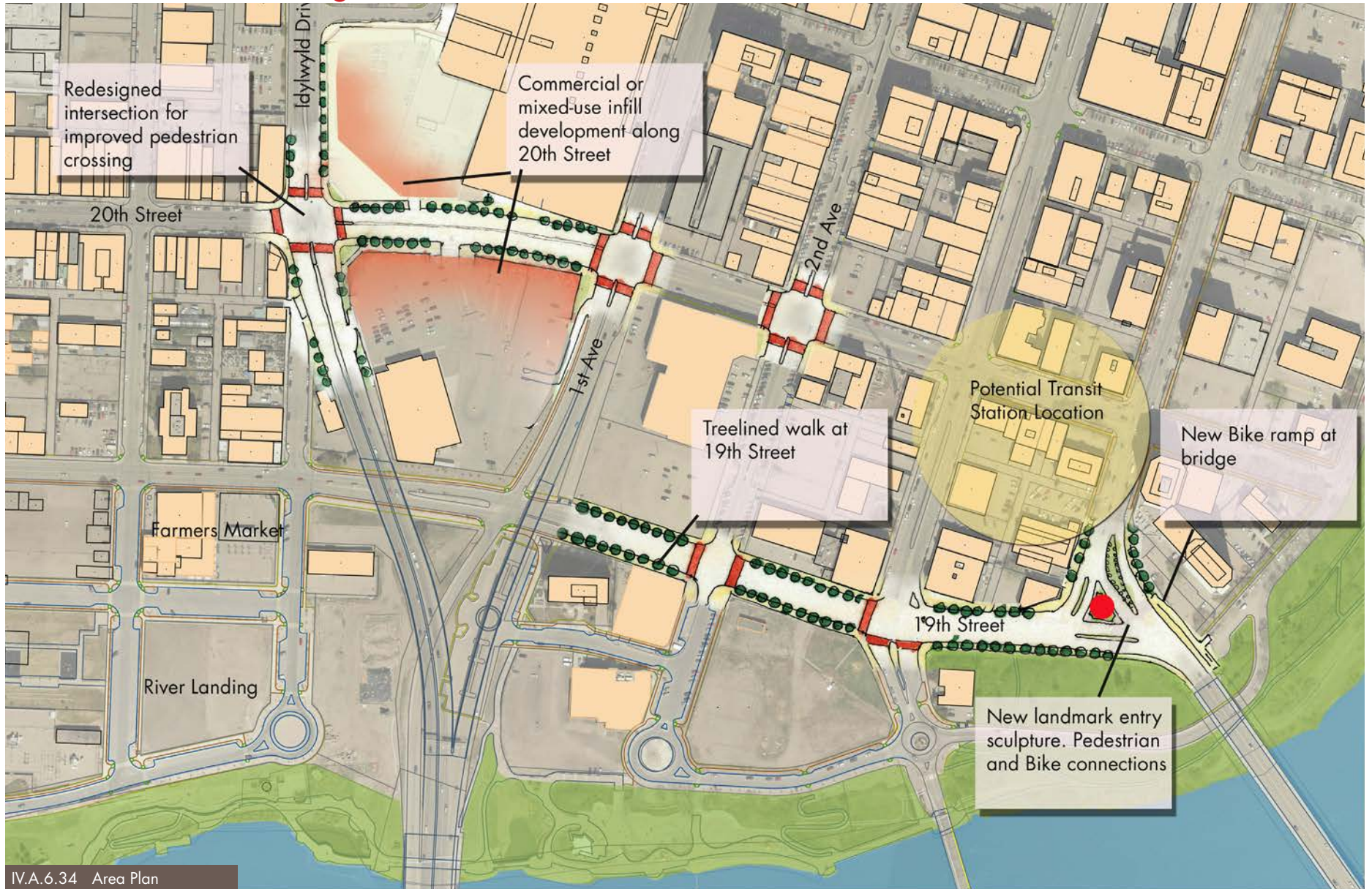


Above: Existing Plan

Below: Challenging intersection at Broadway Bridge, 4th Ave, 19th St



# North of River Landing



## North of River Landing



20th Street and Idylwyld Drive are challenging environments for pedestrians.





IV.A.6.37 Aerial view of Downtown

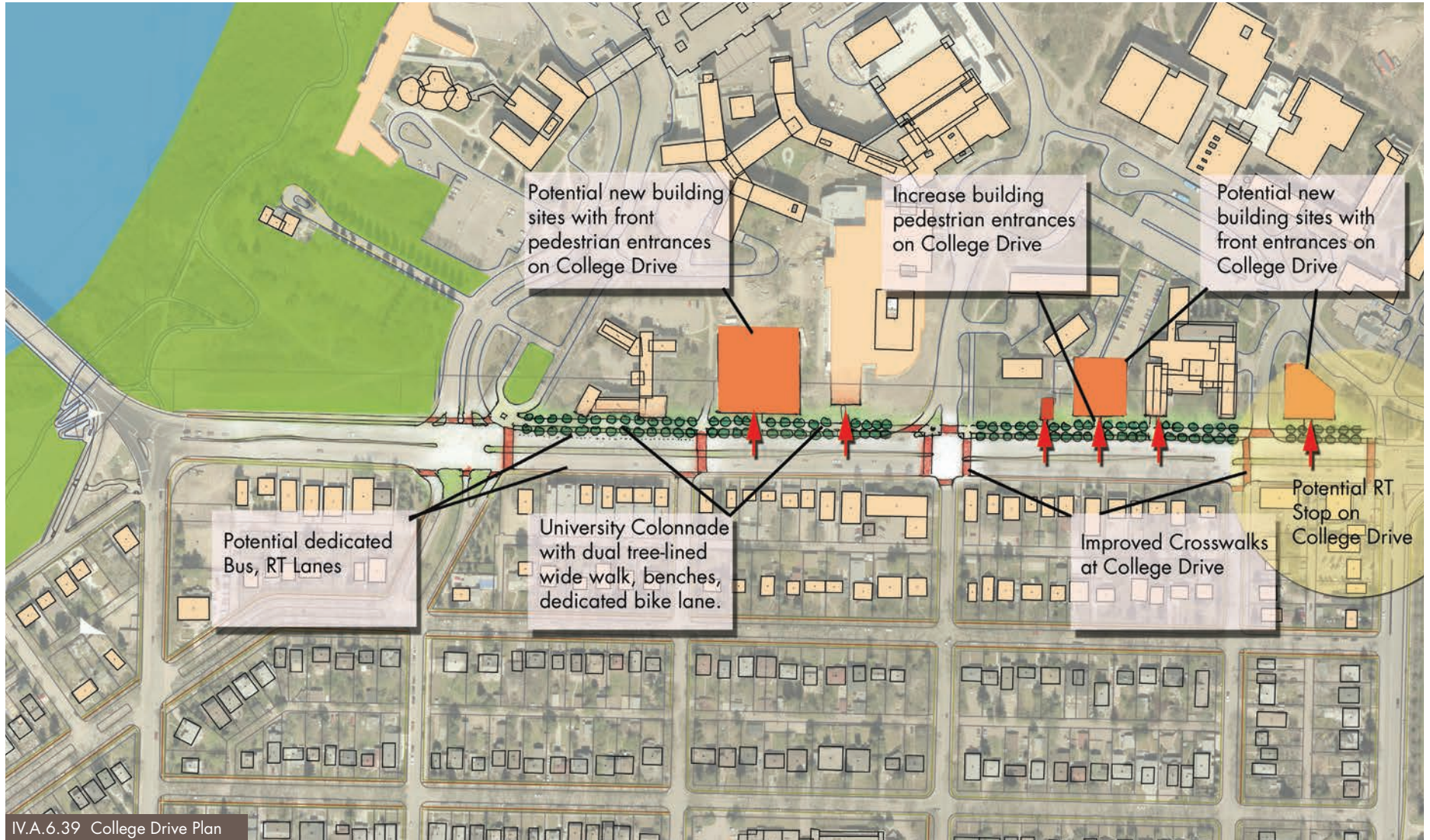
## College Drive

College Drive has the significant presence of the University of Saskatchewan. It is a wide street that is challenging for a pedestrian to cross. The Plan creates a long walk with dual rows of trees along the full length of the university frontage. It will provide a linear park and act as a new front colonnade for the University. The colonnade may require adaptation of the design at some specific locations where the building setbacks are

narrow. The Plan recommends that any new building on College Drive have pedestrian entrances facing the new colonnade. The linear walk and associated bike lane will connect the University more directly to the University Bridge and with the Downtown. Improved cross walks at College Drive are also recommended. Rapid transit routes may be included along College Drive.



# College Drive



# COLLEGE DRIVE: THE UNIVERSITY COLONNADE



IV.A.6.40 College Drive existing conditions with limited pedestrian facilities



VI.A.6.41 University Colonnade Concept with public walk and bike lanes

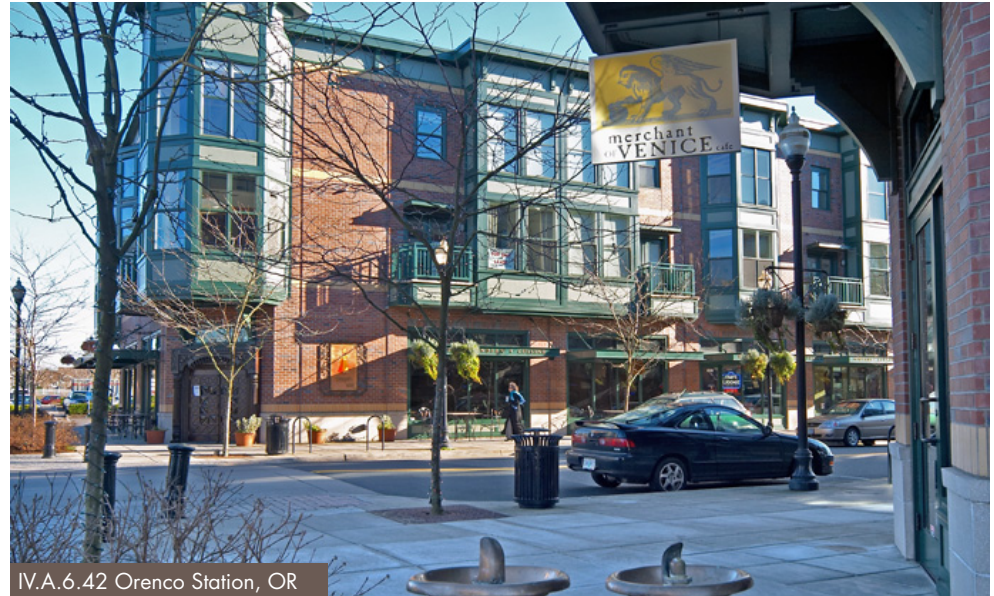


IV.A.6.41a Public walk NYC

## 20th Street, Riversdale

20th Street is the commercial spine of Riversdale and is surrounded by strong residential areas. 20th Street changes in character from east to west. Near the Downtown, a cluster of retail establishments has gradually improved in quality as a result of the Riversdale Business Improvement District and significant streetscape improvements. The portion of 20th Street closer to the train tracks is characterized by more non-profit institutional uses, shelters, some vacant buildings, and surface parking lots. To the west of the tracks, multifamily buildings exist on both sides of the street. Finally, near St. Paul's Hospital, retail and medical establishments dominate the street.

The length of these distinct uses along 20th Street generally corresponds to 5-minute walking distances. The Riversdale Local Area Plan of 2008 discusses the intent to include retail development along much of 20th Street. However, given the area may not have enough retail market demand, the Plan proposes a slightly modified strategy. The Plan proposes that the existing focus areas each be strengthened. The introduction of new small scale mixed-use buildings along 20th Street with residential above and retail below could support existing business and take advantage of a short transit commute to Downtown. Stronger linkages along avenues A-D will improve connections to the Farmer's Market and River Landing as well as support retail in the East Riversdale and the Idlywyld Drive area. In the area west of the track, the Plan proposes the multifamily character of 20th Street be reinforced. In the central section of 20th Street near the train tracks, a catalyst project may be required to strengthen the area. This catalyst project could include the introduction of a government office or a public/private partnership project. Riversdale may also consider the introduction of design guidelines similar to those of Broadway 360.

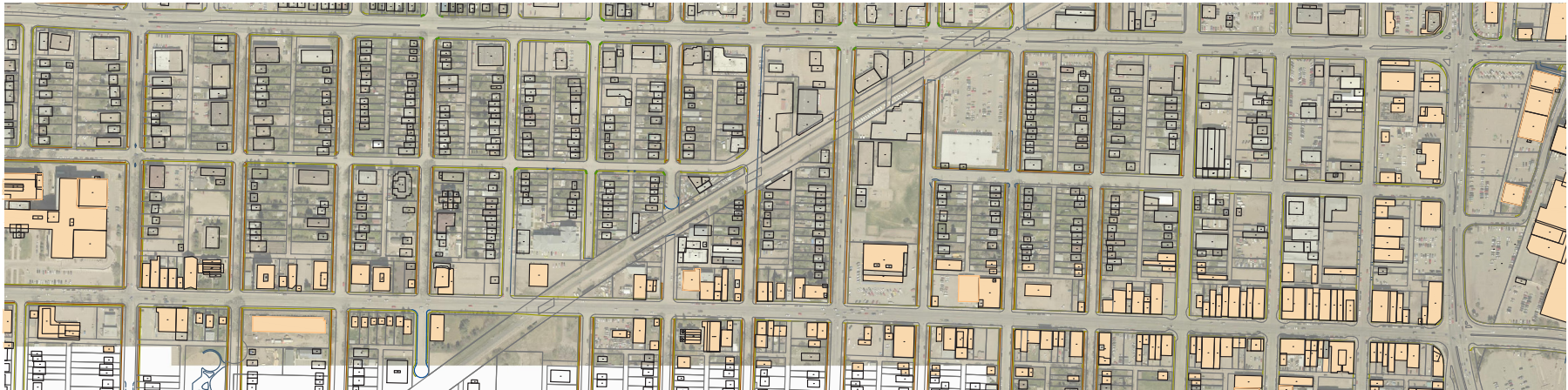


IV.A.6.42 Orenco Station, OR  
Potential Mixed-Use Buildings for 20th Street

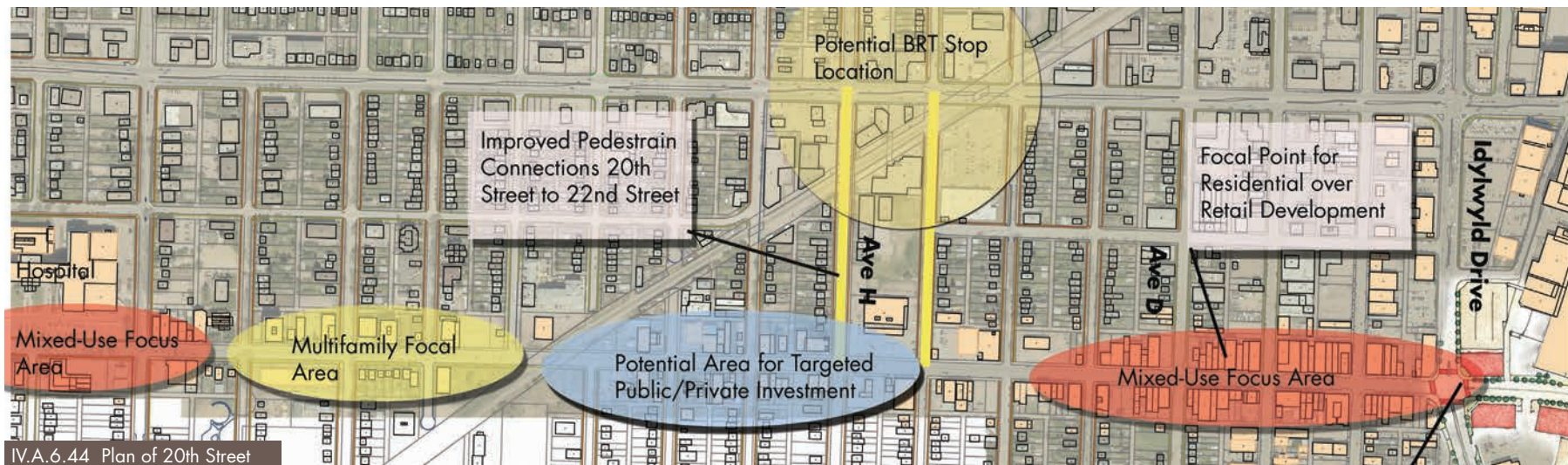


IV.A.6.43 20th Street

## 20th Street, Riversdale



Existing Plan



Targeted Plan

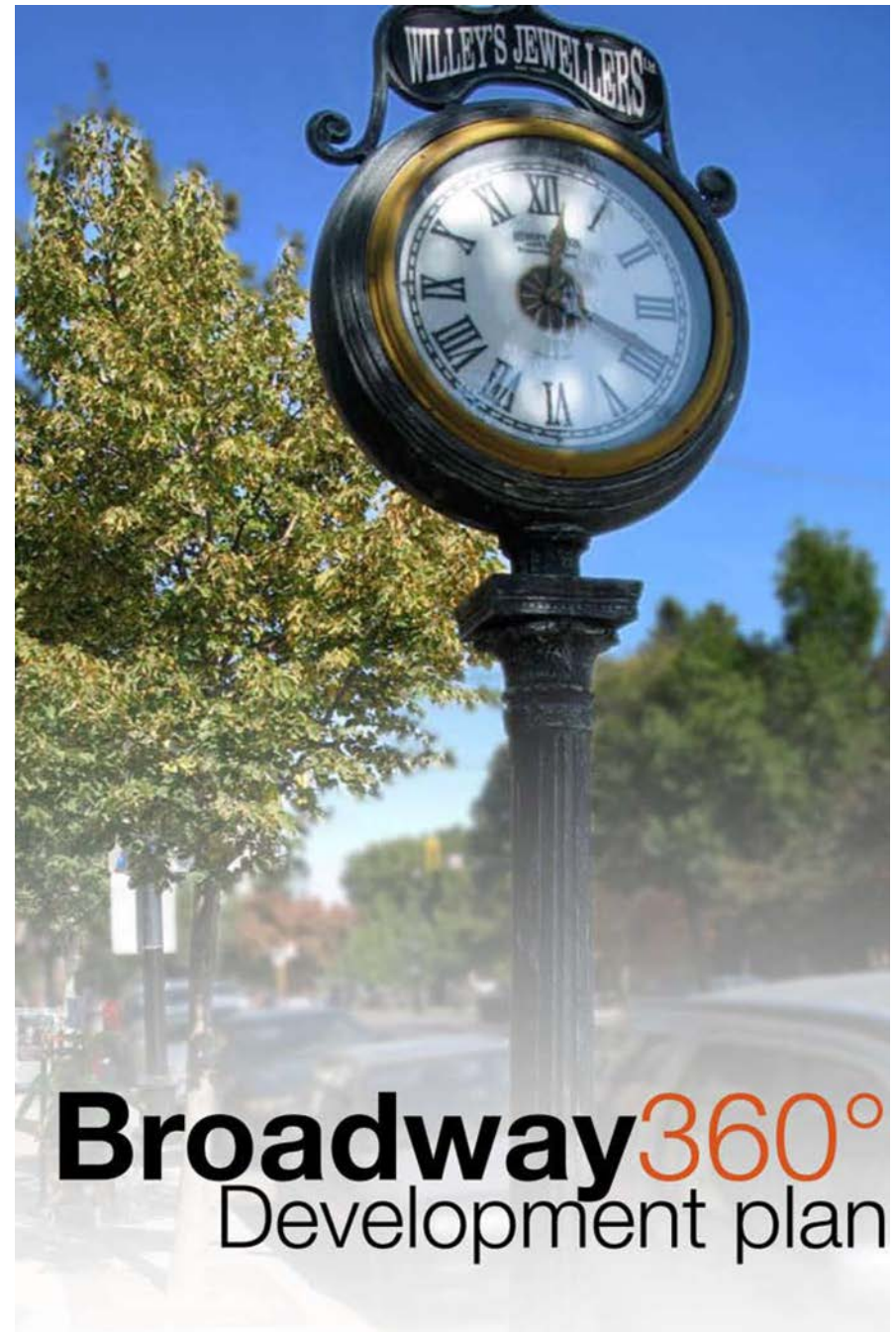
## Nutana: Broadway Avenue

Broadway Avenue is the successful and vital mixed-use centre for the neighbourhood of Nutana. Broadway 360 and other community-based initiatives helped to create this strong outdoor urban environment that serves as a precedent for many areas of Saskatoon and Canada. The revitalization effort has led to some of the most successful retail in the entire City. The pedestrian-oriented retail locations on Broadway Avenue are some of the most sought after in the City and command the highest rents per square metre in the City. The Plan proposes the creation of stronger linkages between Broadway Avenue and the Downtown through the introduction of new pedestrian and bike improvements.

The environment at the Broadway Bridge is challenging for pedestrians and bikes. Improved crosswalks are proposed and improved bike access to the bridge is also recommended. Per the Broadway 360 Plan, the Five Corners intersection is envisioned as a plaza area with new pedestrian-oriented paving and streetscape improvements.

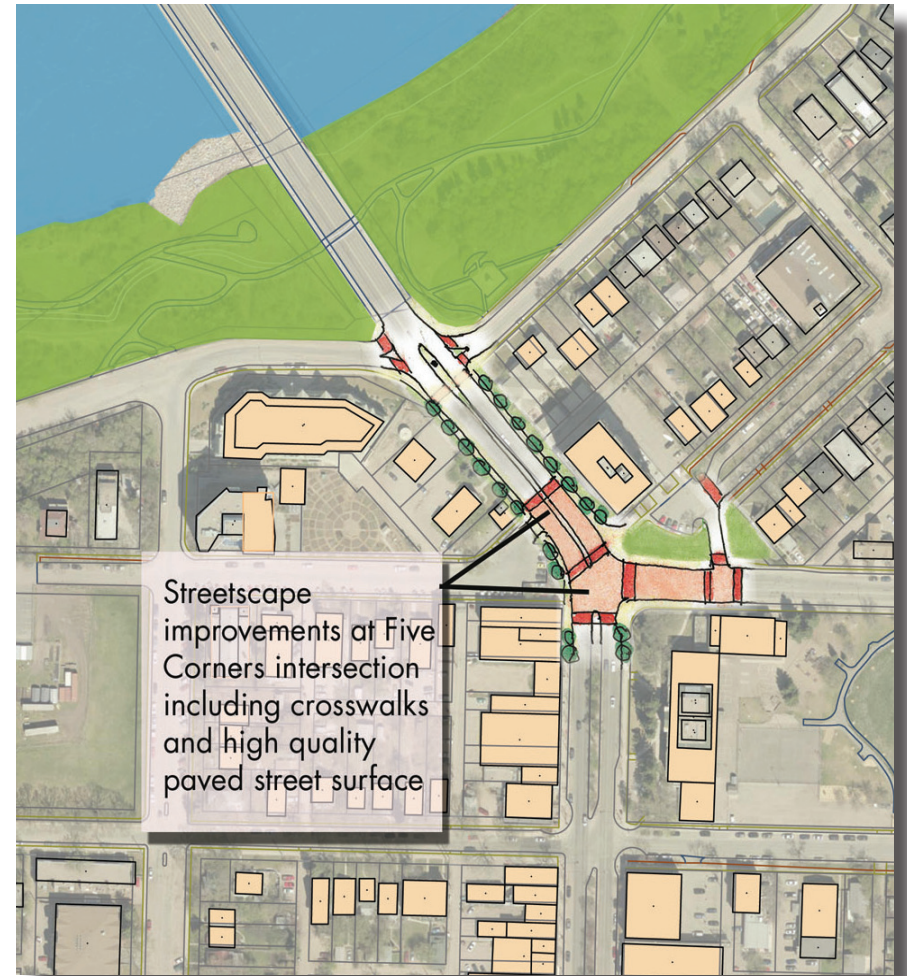
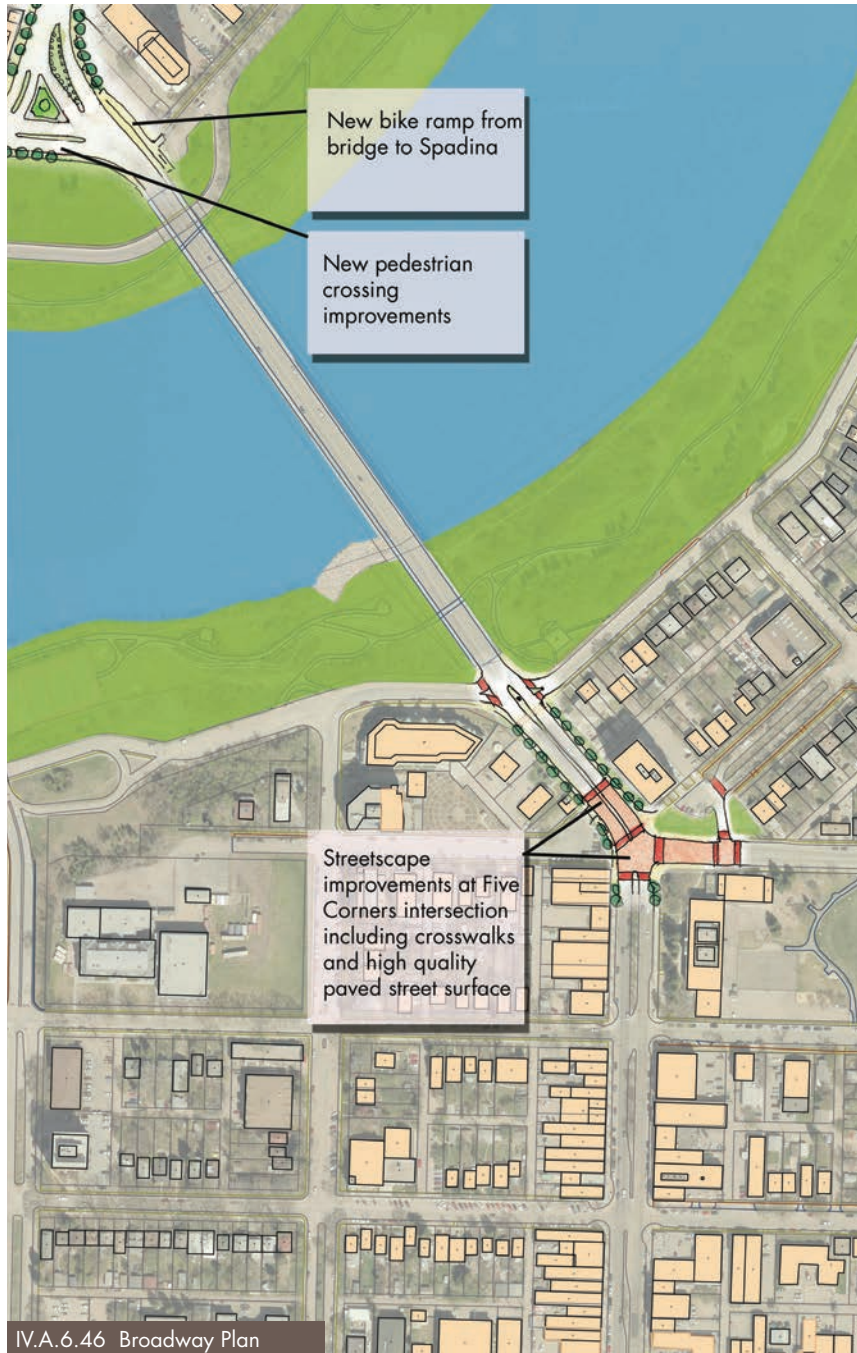


IV.A.6.45 Broadway in Nutana



**Broadway**360°  
Development plan





# IV.B MOVING AROUND

## *IV.B Moving Around & Infrastructure*

### *B.1 Background*

### *B.2 Street Network*

### *B.3 Bridges*

### *B.4 Transit*

### *B.5 Bike Access*

### *B.6 Parking*

### *B.7 Infrastructure*

### *B.8 Streetscape & Sidewalks*

The City Centre Plan proposes multiple improvements to the City's transportation and infrastructure network. It includes more transportation options in keeping with the vision of Saskatoon Speaks. The Plan allows accommodation for auto and truck traffic, but also allows for easier and more convenient transit alternatives, pedestrian priority streets, and greater bike access. The Plan provides opportunities to reduce overall congestion and parking demands. This section also outlines elements of public streetscapes including sidewalk elements, green infrastructure, and methods to construct aspects of the improvements.

## **B.1 BACKGROUND**

### **Summary of 1998 Integrated Transportation Policy Study**

In 1998, the City of Saskatoon completed an Integrated Transportation Policy Study. The purpose of the study was to set integrated strategies for vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and transit. The Study attempted to balance the sometimes conflicting needs of each mode of travel and therefore produce a set of policies that were fair to all users. For example the desire of commuters to have an abundant supply of conveniently located and inexpensive parking is in conflict with the desire to promote forms of travel other than the automobile. Similarly, to restrict the amount of parking to make other forms of travel a more attractive alternative would impact the ability of businesses to attract shoppers to a business area.

While the focus of the Integrated Transportation Policy Study was City-wide, many of the recommended policies within the Study were applicable to travel within the City Centre project area. Some of the key recommendations included:

### **SUMMARY OF 1998 TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

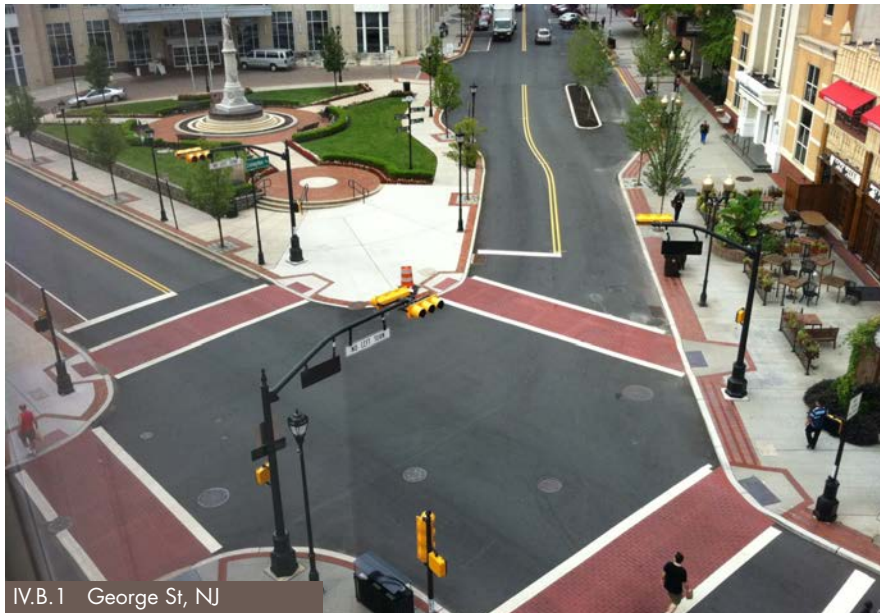
- Ensure the movement of persons and goods meets the physical, economic and social needs of residents and businesses;
- Create and implement transportation plans and strategies to meet the long term transportation demands and to reduce the City's dependency on the automobile in a cost effective manner;
- Provide traffic control devices that facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and promote walking and cycling;
- Provision of a transportation system that allows a reasonable choice of travel modes and level of accessibility;
- Incorporate features into roadway improvement projects that will encourage public transit use;
- Provide loading zones on streets, as appropriate, to accommodate goods handling related to commercial and industrial uses;
- Encourage public transit use as an alternative transportation mode that is more environmentally sustainable to reduce natural resource consumption and car emissions;
- Prepare and maintain a comprehensive bicycle plan which promotes the use of cycling as an alternative mode of transportation and recognizes seasonal variation in use;
- Design new urban development projects and areas to encourage walking, cycling and public transit use by providing adequate sidewalks and pathways, traffic calming features, adequate lighting and other security features, linear parks, convenient bike parking facilities and appropriate spacing of transit stops.

# & INFRASTRUCTURE

## THE INTEGRATED GROWTH PLAN

The City is currently undertaking an Integrated Growth Plan that is a City-wide planning effort in which several of these concepts are being further advanced. They are being coordinated with principles of Smart Growth and sustainable growth as discussed in the City's Strategic Plan and in Saskatoon Speaks. The effort will review rapid transit options, future bridge capacity needs, and land use planning on a City-wide scale, in conjunction with transportation alternatives. The City Centre Plan, which examines a defined compact area, and The Integrated Growth Plan, which examines a City-wide vision, will reinforce each other's principles.

The City also completed a Transportation Management Demand study in 2010 to further coordinate strategies that reduce vehicle trips,

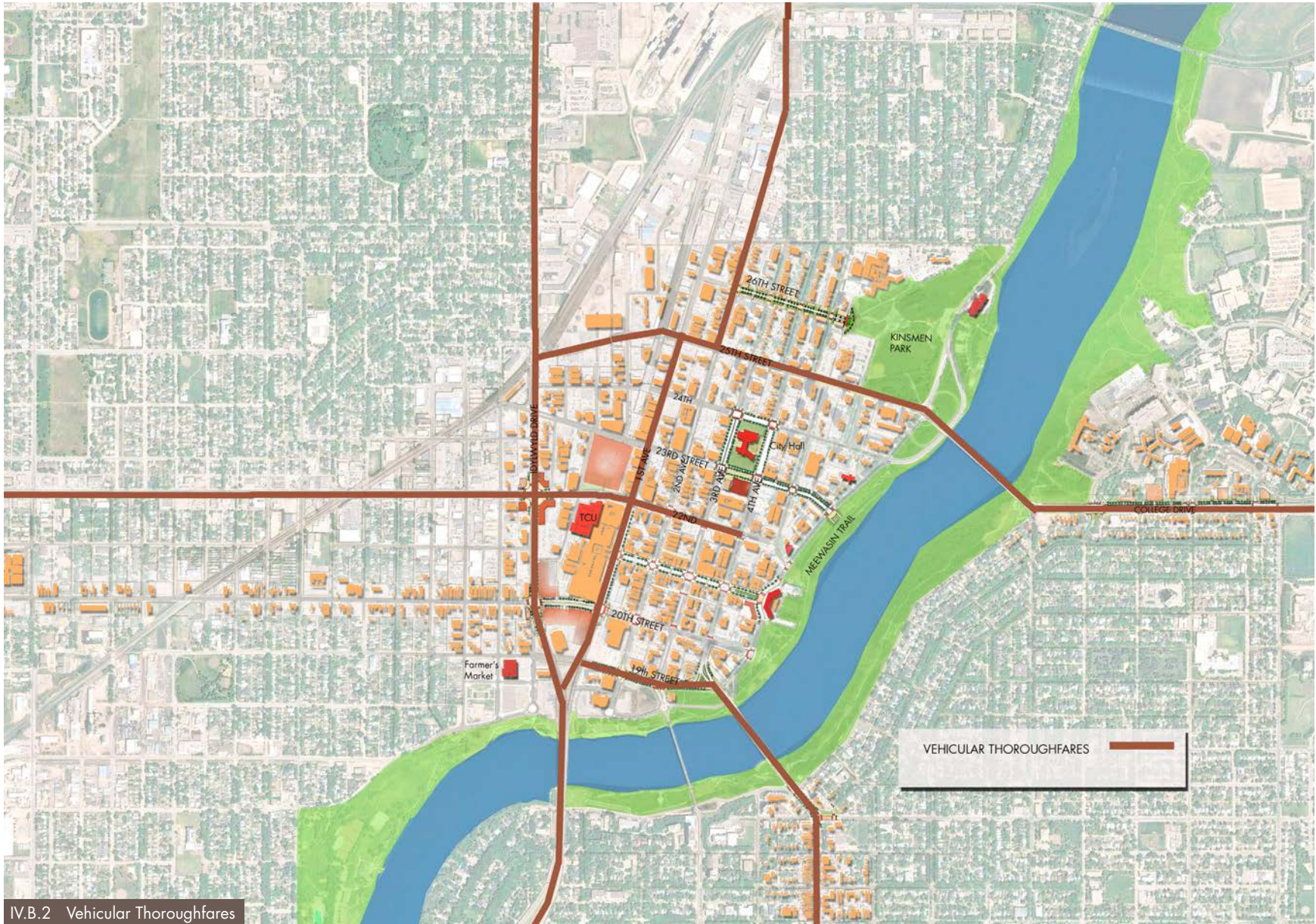


## B.2 STREET NETWORK

The City Centre Plan proposes to balance critical vehicular access for autos and trucks with an enhanced pedestrian network. The term "complete streets" used in Saskatoon's Strategic Plan refers to the consideration of the public right-of-way as an integrated design of pedestrian areas, great building frontages, appropriate traffic capacity, bike access, transit lanes, truck access, accessible design, and landscaping. The streets are envisioned to have context sensitive solutions that reflect the urban character of the City Centre.

All streets should allow for vehicular access and all streets should include basic elements of walkable design. The Plan proposes a hierarchy of streets in which some thoroughfares handle higher volumes of traffic, transit, and truck access while also allowing for safe pedestrian crossings. Other streets become pedestrian priority streets to promote economic development, place making, and enhancing neighbourhood identity without eliminating vehicles. Several streets in the Downtown are wider than those found in many other successful city centres including Toronto and Vancouver. The wide right-of-ways provide an opportunity to create this hierarchy of streets which will include both the functional design and the rich series of public spaces envisioned by the community.

There are several design details and traffic calming measures that allow this hierarchy of streets to accommodate pedestrians. The Institute of Transportation Engineers Context Sensitive Solutions manual describes several practices. Reduced curb radiuses require vehicles to make turns at intersections slowly and reduce speed for pedestrians. Reduced turning radiuses also decrease the distance a pedestrian must cross over the travel lanes. Curb extensions, also known as bulb outs, are extensions of the sidewalk area into the parking lane near the corners



of an intersection. These reduce the crossing distances for pedestrians, without impeding traffic flow. Reduced lane widths are a common method to reduce speed of traffic in urban areas while allowing traffic flow. High visibility crosswalks made with materials such as epoxy paints or various paving materials are also important to alerting vehicles to the presence of pedestrians. Adjusted timing of traffic lights and countdown crossing signals can also allow more frequent and safer pedestrian crossings.

## Provision of “Thoroughfares”

The Downtown will always experience a level of through traffic due to its proximity to major high volume roadways and to four of the City’s roadway river crossings. The intent of the Plan is to control and manage the through traffic on efficient urban thoroughfares, and to not attract additional through traffic with high speed roadways through the Downtown.

A vehicular **Urban Thoroughfare** allows pedestrian activity along its edges while also allowing significant volumes of traffic. Examples of thoroughfares include Boulevards in Paris which are lined with shops, have clearly demarcated crossing points, and yet also have several moving lanes of traffic, accommodate trucks, and high volumes of cars. By carefully designing turning motions along them, they can move traffic efficiently. Broadway in Saskatoon, which also conveys extensive volumes of traffic, is a highly successful pedestrian-oriented retail street.

The identification of thoroughfares in the City Centre is recognition that there are specific streets where the needs of the vehicles may require

a priority while pedestrians and cyclists will also use these streets. The provisions for pedestrians and cyclists will need to be carefully coordinated with efficient movement of significant volumes of traffic.

The following roadways are identified as potential through routes:  
North to South

- Idylwyld Drive from 19th Street to 33rd Street
- First Avenue – 19th Street to 25th Street
- Second Avenue – 25th Street to Princess Street
- Third Avenue – Princess Street to 33rd Street

East to West

- 19th Street – Avenue A to Broadway Bridge
- 25th Street – Idylwyld Drive to University Bridge
- 22nd Street– west of 4th Ave.



IV.B.3 1st Ave.

View of 1st Avenue existing conditions

Concept study of First Avenue



IV.B.4 Potential 1st Ave.

### FIRST AVENUE – 19TH STREET TO 25TH STREET

First Avenue between 20th Street and 22nd Street consists of four lanes with parking on both sides. It has a 30 m right of way. The adjacent land use is primarily retail in nature with the Midtown Plaza occupying the west side frontage. Modest corner bulb outs are in place at the 21st Street intersection.

The Plan recommends that the cross section of this portion of First Avenue be modified to allow bike lanes adjacent to sidewalks. The parallel parking lanes will shift closer to the street centerline and therefore reduce pedestrian crossing distances. A centre median may be constructed at certain locations provided there is sufficient distance between driveways and intersections. Increased curb extensions at key intersections and improved crosswalks could provide greater comfort to pedestrians. These transformations could allow greater retail opportunities on First Avenue while still allowing two efficient moving lanes in each direction.

First Avenue between 22nd Street and 25th Street is also recommended to have a cross section that consists of two traveling lanes in each direction, a centre two-way left turn lane or raised median and parallel parking on each side.

### SECOND AVENUE – 25TH STREET TO PRINCESS STREET

Second Avenue between 25th Street and Princess Street consists of two traveling lanes in each direction, a centre two-way left turn lane and parallel parking on each side. On-street parking is in high demand south of King Street and moderate north of King Street. Some sidewalk trees exist within this area. Conversion to angle parking along Second Avenue between 25th Street and Princess Street is not recommended.



IV.B.5 Idylwyld Drive

Idylwyld Drive existing conditions (above)

In the long-term, Idylwyld Drive may be an area of economic development and be provided with greater amenities for pedestrians as in the concept sketch below.



IV.B.6 Potential Idylwyld Dr.

## IDYLWYLD DRIVE

Idylwyld Drive is currently designated as a provincial highway and handles significant traffic volumes. It may be downgraded to a highway connector after the opening of the Circle Drive South project. Traffic volumes on Idylwyld Drive, particularly south of 22nd Street may decrease somewhat with the completion of the Circle Drive South project. Idylwyld Drive will also be impacted by the extension of 25th Street from 1st Avenue to Idylwyld Drive.

In the long-term, economic development along Idylwyld Drive will require greater provisions for pedestrians and possibly transit, while it will continue to provide efficient service for large numbers of vehicles. These adjustments will require wider sidewalks, street trees, improved crosswalks, as well as carefully designed vehicle turning motions. Detailed adjustments to the lane design of Idylwyld Drive; however, can only fully be studied after the impacts to traffic of the new Circle Drive South and 25th Street Extension projects are known. In the near term, improved painted crosswalks are required to better connect the Downtown to western neighbourhoods of the City.

### **19TH STREET – AVENUE A TO BROADWAY BRIDGE**

19th Street between Avenue A and Second Avenue was reconstructed several years ago as part of the development of the River Landing project. Streetscaping treatments along this portion of 19th Street were constructed that link the River Landing project east of Idylwyld Drive with the portion west of Idylwyld Drive including the Farmer’s Market.

Streetscape improvements on 19th street should be extended west of Second Avenue to the bottom of the Broadway Bridge. This would enhance the pedestrian and cyclist connections between the Broadway Bridge, the Downtown, River Landing and Riversdale. The intersection of 19th Street, Broadway Bridge and 4th Avenue is a significant entry point into the Downtown for pedestrians, vehicles, and cyclists and should be reconfigured as an important entry space that accommodates each of those users.

### **25TH STREET – IDYLWYLD DRIVE TO UNIVERSITY BRIDGE**

In 2013, 25th Street is being extended from First Avenue to Idylwyld Drive thereby providing a direct connection between Idylwyld Drive and the University Bridge. This will also connect Highway 5 (College Drive/25th Street) to Highway 11 (Idylwyld Drive).

25th Street will provide two lanes in each direction with left turning lanes at intersections. On street parallel parking will be provided between First Avenue and Idylwyld Drive. On street parking is prohibited east of First Avenue.

25th Street east of First Avenue has been constructed with streetscaping treatments. An on street unmarked bike lane is provided on both sides of the roadway. The extension of 25th Street to Idylwyld Drive also includes the provision of streetscaping and on street bike lanes.

### **SNOW REMOVAL**

Snow removal strategies are a critical part of a winter city and important to the circulation network. The City should develop a snow management program for streets as well as sidewalks. Designated snow deposit areas should be established in various parts of the City to reduce the need for extensive truck hauling. Heated sidewalks in select locations as discussed in IV.B.8 may be one component of the management program.



IV.B.7 25th Street

25th Street Extension Plan



## B.3 BRIDGES

### EXISTING BRIDGES

City Centre is currently served by three bridges including the University Bridge, Broadway Bridge and Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge (Idylwyld Drive). The bridges provide key linkages to the region and currently operate at capacity.

The University and Broadway Bridges are arterial roadway bridges providing two traveling lanes in each direction with pedestrian walkways on each side. Cyclists often use the walkways due to the narrow traffic lane width on the roadway portion of the bridges. This results in pedestrian/cyclist and cyclist/cyclist conflicts. Pedestrian and cyclist linkages at each end of these two bridges are poor. Due to the structural configuration and heritage aspects of these bridges widening of the bridges to better provide for rapid transit, pedestrians, and cyclists is not considered feasible. The walkways on the University Bridge have been widened in the past but are still considered too narrow to meet the demands of its users.

The Senator Sid Buckwold Bridge is a freeway style bridge providing three traffic lanes in each direction. A walkway is provided on the east side of the bridge. Cyclists are prohibited from using the Idylwyld Drive freeway so cyclists crossing the river at this location must use the narrow walkway resulting in pedestrian/cyclist and cyclist/cyclist conflicts. Pedestrian and cyclist linkages at each end of the bridge are poor.

The Traffic Bridge, that is currently closed, has provided an additional river crossing for the City Centre in the past. The City is pursuing the replacement of the Traffic Bridge within the next five years with a structure that will provide one traffic lane in each direction and wide shared pedestrian/cyclist pathways on each side of the bridge. Pedestrian and cyclist connections between the bridge and the Meewasin Trail are to be provided on each side of the bridge.

### ENHANCING FUTURE CROSSING CAPACITY

With the anticipated growth of the City's population to 500,000, crossing capacity will eventually need to be expanded. To meet the vision of Saskatoon Speaks, the new bridge crossings will be designed to reduce auto-dependency and congestion and will focus expanded capacity on transit, pedestrian, and bike improvements.

The ongoing IGP study will examine future bridge crossings in detail. Without attempting to predict the recommendations of the IGP, it is anticipated that there is little opportunity to provide an additional vehicular bridge within the City Centre area other than the extension of 24th Street on the west side of the river to College Drive on the east. Other potential crossing locations may include 33rd Street. The "24th Street Bridge" option would be considered as a twin to the University Bridge. It would allow for dedicated transit only lanes, additional bike, and pedestrian crossings, and potential vehicle lanes. An option would reduce the number of traffic lanes on the University Bridge from four to two thereby freeing up space to provide a dedicated transit lane, and better pedestrian and cyclist facilities. The two traffic lanes may be transferred to the new 24th Street Bridge. Alternatively, the bridges could operate as separate west bound and east bound traffic lanes. The one-way westbound condition on the University Bridge could be extended to Idylwyld Drive and the one-way eastbound condition on the 24th Street Bridge also extended to Idylwyld Drive thereby freeing up room on those roadways for better pedestrian, cyclist and transit facilities. The University and 24th Street Bridges would meet at Clarence Avenue (at the top of the University Bridge).

There are other travel mode, lane direction and lane configuration options available for the proposed 24th Street bridge; however, the underlying idea is to add capacity for multimodal transportation and to replicate the heritage characteristics of the University Bridge.

### PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

The Plan recommends that enclosed pedestrian bridges over public right of ways, often referred to as "plus 15's," not be permitted. In other cities, these enclosed bridges have been shown to detract from ground level commercial uses and reduce the activity of the street.

## B.4 TRANSIT

### EXISTING TRANSIT SYSTEM

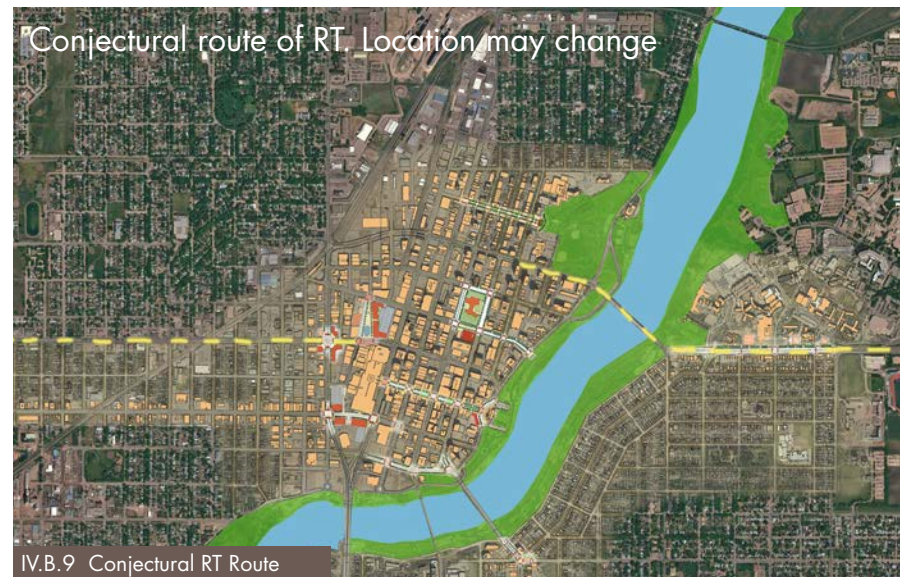
Currently Saskatoon Transit Services provides a city-wide timed-transfer bus system. That system includes a major transfer point within the Downtown referred to as the Bus Mall. The Bus Mall is a dedicated transit only roadway located on 23rd Street between Second and Third Avenues and has been in operation since the mid-1980s. While considered a success in terms of providing a convenient transfer point, the Bus Mall is disliked by many of its users according to stakeholder surveys and the City's Public Spaces Report.

### NEW RAPID TRANSIT

The IGP study is planning a new City-wide transit system including the potential implementation of Rapid Transit routes. The Plan proposes elimination of the Bus Mall and the opening of 23rd Street to through traffic. It would be replaced with a bus or light rail Rapid Transit system. A bus rapid transit system uses bus-dedicated lanes that permit direct express service between distant key locations. It will link the suburbs with the City Centre. It is anticipated that rapid transit routes may enter the City Centre from the west on 22nd Street, from the east on 25th Street (College Drive), from the south on Idylwyld Drive and from the north on Second Avenue (from Warman Road). A potential new transit station may be located on 23rd Street.

### TRANSIT IN THE CITY CENTRE

These Rapid Transit routes will circulate through the City Centre dropping off and picking up passengers. Due to the "rapid" characteristics of these routes it is anticipated that within the City Centre the routes will be located on roadways that will allow the service to move quickly through the Downtown such as 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenues and 19th, 20th and 24th Streets. A combination of these roadways could provide locations



for dedicated transfer station points. Major stops are anticipated to coincide with areas of high demand such as the central Downtown retail area and areas of new growth such as the new west Downtown and the River Landing area. Given the winter climate, services must be provided to allow users to wait in warm areas. Real time bus arrival time information transmitted to phones and computers allows individuals to wait indoors until the bus arrives.

A circulator bus that runs in a loop around the Downtown may provide easy access to various portions of the Downtown and easy connections from the Rapid Transit Stations to employment areas. It will also facilitate a “park once” strategy.

### **FUTURE LIGHT RAIL**

The City’s current planning horizon of 500,000 population places it within the realm of the City having a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) rail system at that time. As such, the City should embark on a planning exercise to identify and protect potential LRT routes approaching and within the City Centre. The future of LRT is subject to the Integrated Growth Plan study. Past transportation studies have identified potential LRT routes. These have included railway right of ways. Potentially routes to the east, west, north and south should be identified now so as to protect corridors for future use. The efficiency of the LRT will also depend on land use planning and encouragement of transit-oriented growth in suburban areas adjacent to transit corridors. The concept will require further study.



IV.B.10 BRT Lane New York

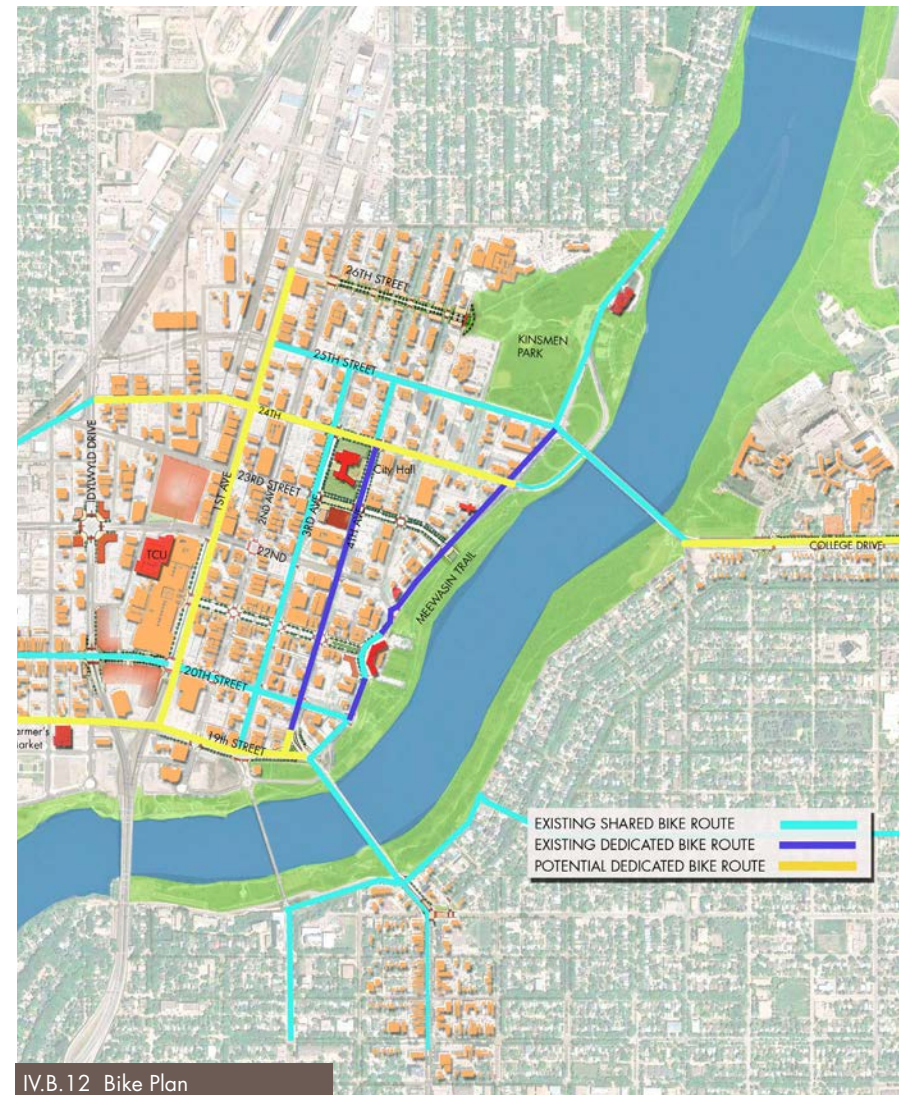
## B.5 BIKE ACCESS

There are several streets that can accommodate dedicated bike lanes. It is recommended that 1st Avenue, 24th Street, 19th Street, and College Drive accommodate additional dedicated bike lanes. Bike lanes are recommended to be placed directly adjacent to sidewalk curbs with a protective buffer area adjacent to the parallel parking lane. Examples of similar systems include Copenhagen and New York City. The specific bike lane designs will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Safer bike ramps at the ends of bridges are also recommended. These measures will expand the area bike network. Bike parking should be located at strategic locations, with potential conversion of single on-street parking spaces at important points within the City. In the long-term, as residential population increases, a bike share system is recommended.



IV.B.11 Bike Lane New York

Above: Dual bike lanes with buffer to on street parking



IV.B.12 Bike Plan

Above: Bike framework plan

## B.6 PARKING

Parking is integral to transportation and is a critical issue for the Downtown. In the near term, parking, both on and off the street, is important to local businesses and future development. The Plan provides a discussion of an overall parking strategy and its implementation through policy measures. A detailed discussion of a parking strategy is located in the Policy Section of Chapter IV.C.

## B.7 INFRASTRUCTURE

### a. General Infrastructure

The capacity of the City's Centre's water, power, and sewer infrastructure requires improvement to serve the forecasted growth. The City Centre's power supply will need to be increased and will require that additional transformer vaults be installed under the sidewalks. Increased demand for water supply and sewage systems will need to be addressed early in the development process. Conservation methods in both energy use and water use, such as district energy systems, energy efficient building systems, lighting, gray water reuse in individual buildings, and storm water reuse may slow the growth of demand for new infrastructure. The efficiencies may not be sufficient to address the entire growth in demand.

The City's existing stormwater drainage system discharges directly into the river without treating it. Chemical residue on urban surfaces contaminates urban stormwater and therefore, the Plan recommends stormwater treatment systems be installed over time. A network of bio-filters, or rain gardens, installed in long linear stretches of road sides as described in Chapter IV.B.8, can capture and clean a portion of the urban stormwater. But other treatment systems will also be required. New buildings constructed with green roofs or blue roofs might retain stormwater, and slowly allow its release to a filtration facility.

### b. Sustainable Infrastructure Design

The Plan proposes several measures to address sustainability. Increased long-term use of transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian priority streets will reduce energy consumption and lower carbon emissions. Trash recycling and post-waste management infrastructure should continually be reviewed and enhanced to divert trash from landfills. Additional infrastructure measures include adjustments to public lighting, encouragement of district energy, rain gardens, and accommodation of electric vehicle recharging stations.

### PUBLIC LIGHTING

In the long term, street lighting may be converted to lower energy consumption fixtures such as LED. Light fixtures that reduce ambient light and direct light down to the ground or toward specific tasks reduce light pollution, and consume less energy. They may be used in new and renovated public places.

### DISTRICT ENERGY

District energy systems are highly efficient systems that generate electricity, heating, and cooling for a group of buildings within a close proximity of each other. In the long-term, district energy supply systems may be used for portions of the Downtown. In recent years, they have been installed for single ownership groupings of buildings such as universities and hospitals; however, there is growing application in new large redevelopment areas and in new communities. The North Downtown area may provide this type of system.

## B.8 STREETScape & SIDEWALKS

### RAIN GARDENS, EVERGREEN PLANTING, & RESILIENT PLANTING

Sustainable stormwater treatment practices include the use of rain gardens along the edges of streets and public spaces. Stormwater runoff from urban roads is contaminated by chemical pollutants. The stormwater can be cleaned using natural plant filter systems called “bio-filters” or rain gardens. Their use helps maintain natural water table levels. A network of rain gardens can be installed on green streets that connect the Meewasin Trail to the neighbourhoods of the City Centre as well as in new public plazas. Their installation will be coordinated with the location of existing underground utility vaults in the sidewalk. Low scale evergreen plantings along the streets will provide colour to the City through-out the year. Evergreens in potted containers on sidewalks, installed by private merchants, can be used to deflect winds and enliven the pedestrian environment during the shoulder and winter seasons.

### SNOW REMOVAL & HEATED SIDEWALKS

A snow management system is a critical part of a winter city. Designated snow deposit areas should be established in various parts of the City to reduce the need for extensive truck hauling. Heated sidewalks in strategic locations such as the City Hall Square, 21st Street, and key transit stops may facilitate pedestrian comfort. They also can reduce maintenance costs from snow clearing. Heated sidewalks maybe sourced through connections with nearby public buildings or through the recapture of waste energy. They can be located in coordination with existing utility vaults and existing sidewalk features.



IV.B.13 Bio-Filters Los Angeles

# GREENING THE STREETS YEAR AROUND



IV.B.14- 17: Temporary installations of evergreens can be used as windscreen (above) to shield patrons from cold winds or to add year around colour to city public areas. Below right image of phased street conversion for pedestrian use with paint and potted plants



## PHASING OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY FEATURES

Some of the proposed adjustments to pedestrian priority streets can be accomplished in phases using low cost temporary installation methods for the initial phases and then more permanent installations over the long-term. Several cities have converted portions of their road surfaces to pedestrian areas using lower cost temporary measures that include paint, textured coatings, and large potted plants. The conversions capture underused areas of road surface and demarcate them for pedestrian use. The conversions might also be done on a seasonal basis so that pedestrians use an area during the summer months and the same area reverts to parking during the winter months. The conversions are reversible or adjustable so that the impact from actual use of the converted area can be reviewed prior to installing permanent construction. New York City has embarked on an extensive program of road surface conversions using this low cost phased approach. In many areas, the conversions have resulted in increased revenues for the surrounding businesses. Figures IV.B.18-20.



Before temporary installation

After temporary installation





# IV.C POLICY

## C.1 DESIGN GUIDELINES & PROPOSED ZONING ADJUSTMENTS

- IV.C POLICY
- C.1 *Design Guidelines & Proposed Zoning Adjustments*
- C.2 *Residential Incentives*
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- C.4 *Sustainable Building Design*
- C.5 *Heritage and Culture*
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Policy allows the government to guide how private development can support the overall vision of the City Centre. Policies should be flexible enough to encourage investment in the City and allow for creative investments, and yet limit practices that harm the overall vision of the City Centre. The policy section includes design guidelines, recommendations for specific zoning adjustments, housing initiatives, support for sustainable design, support for heritage and culture, and methods to increase structured parking throughout the City Centre.

### a. **General Design Guideline Strategies:**

The following general strategies apply to the neighbourhoods, places, and zoning districts that are within the City Centre boundaries. The zoning districts that are within the area include RM1, RM5, MX1, M2, M3, M4, B2, B5, B5B, B5C, B6, RA1, PUD, and AG. The design guidelines strategies focus on protecting and increasing the walkable character of each street while maintaining a variety of architectural expressions. The most important aspect of building design in urban areas is how the building is placed to engage the street. Buildings must line the public right-of-way and have front entrances that open onto it. This is an established pattern of places along 21st Street, 2nd Avenue as well as a number of other streets in the City Centre. To accomplish this, the design guidelines require placement of the buildings near the front property line. The regulation of architectural details and styles is less important to establishing walkable streets than the placement of the buildings. As a result, guidelines allow private development the flexibility to create a variety of building formats and styles that encourage a diverse and animated City Centre.

Frontage, Height, and Parking Placement are the three basic criteria used in the design guidelines. Each of the criteria is described on the following pages. The criteria are adjusted to accommodate the unique aspects of different portions of the City Centre. A design guidelines chart on the following pages describes how each criterion is provided for in each portion of the City Centre.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES THREE GENERAL CRITERIA

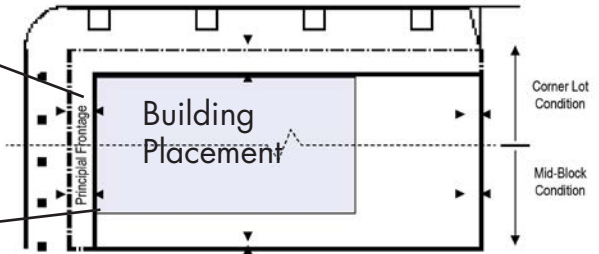
See Design Guidelines Chart for Dimensions

### Frontage:

Continuous rhythm of building facades along the street is critical to high-quality public street spaces. The design guidelines require placement of new buildings and building additions along the street front. The Principal Frontage is the area parallel to the front property line. The front façade must be located in the Principal Frontage area according to the Design Guidelines Chart.

Principal Frontage area

Facade must occupy specified percentage of Frontage area.



### Height:

The existing maximum height limits are maintained unless specifically noted otherwise. The design guidelines require partial step-backs at the upper levels of buildings. The partial step-backs serve two purposes. They deflect winds on taller buildings from being blown down onto pedestrians. They also allow new taller buildings to be compatible in scale with the historic low-rise buildings that dominate the City Centre. The height guidelines for each area of the City Centre are described in the Design Guidelines Chart.

Max. Height

Portion of building not stepped back

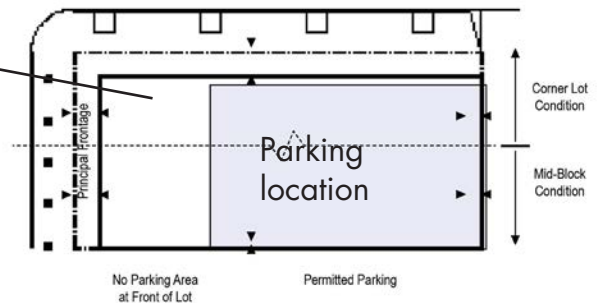
Partial Step-back



### Parking Placement & Service Locations:

One of the issues of greatest concern in the City Centre has been the growth of surface parking lots. The design guidelines require placement of new buildings and building additions along the street front so that parking areas are forced to the rear of the lot and hidden behind the buildings. New surface lots must be set back from the front property line and screened. Parking is also permitted in parking structures that are screened on their primary front and have retail on the front portion of the ground level. The Parking Placement guidelines for each area of the City Centre are described in the Design Guidelines Chart. Service locations should be accessed from side street or rear lane.

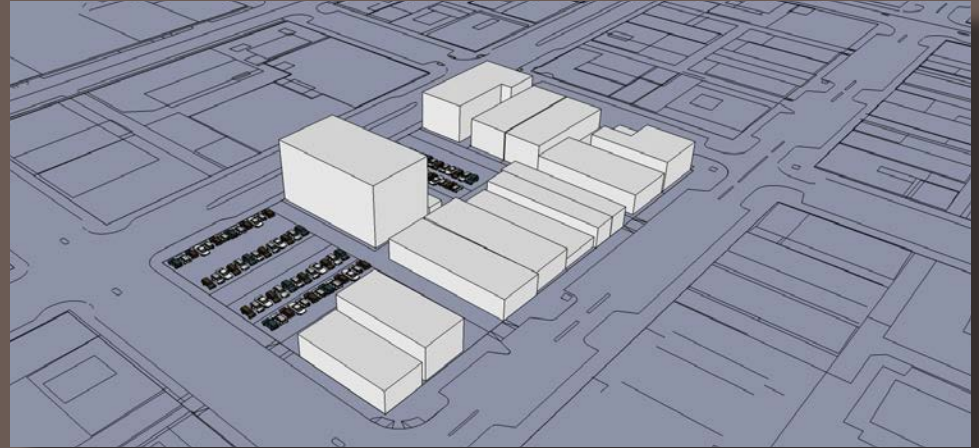
Parking Setback



Diagrams Credit: Smart Code

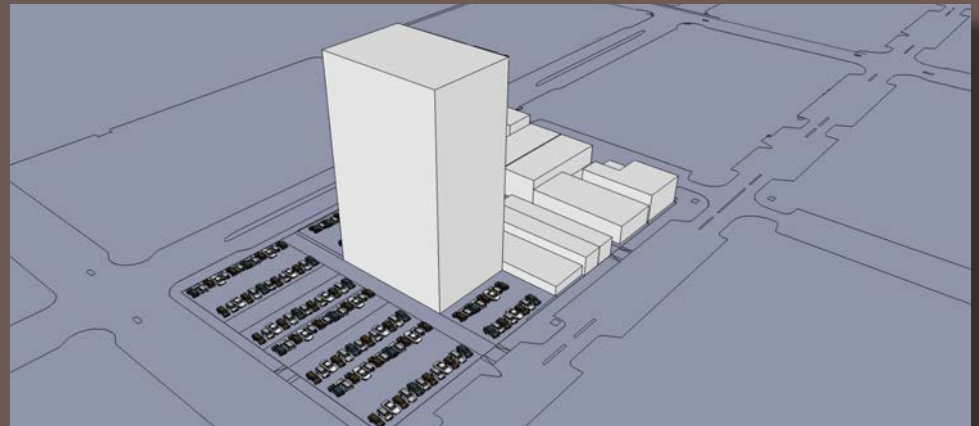
## Existing Condition

Typical existing block has several small buildings with small surface parking lots.



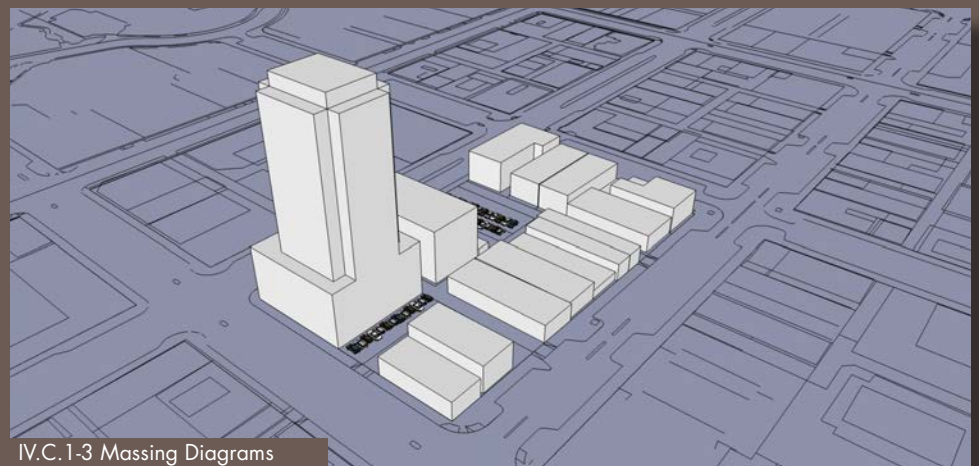
## No Guidelines

Current building patterns demand larger buildings with more parking. There is an established pattern of demolishing small buildings to make room for the required surface parking.



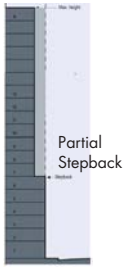
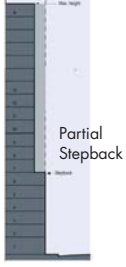
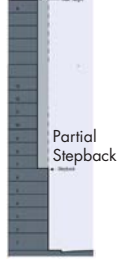
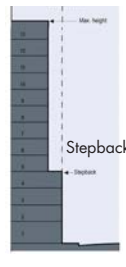
## Design Guidelines

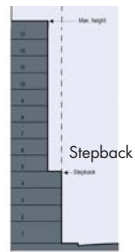
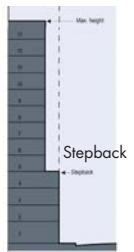
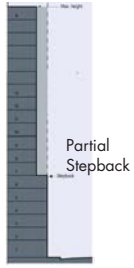
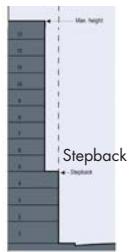
New design guidelines allow for larger buildings. Associated parking is located toward the rear of lot or in screened structured parking areas. Height setbacks along portions of the building establish a cohesive streetscape with tall and short buildings.



IV.C.1-3 Massing Diagrams

# DESIGN GUIDELINES CHART

	CBD	Civic Centre Area	North of River Landing	Warehouse
<b>Zoning Areas</b>	B6, B3, M4 portion	B6	B6, (DCD1 not Included)	B6, RA1, B3
<b>Primary Frontage</b>	The Primary Frontage is the area .5m or less from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 75% or more of length of the Primary Frontage.	The Primary Frontage is the area .5m or less from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 75% or more of length of the Primary Frontage.	The Primary Frontage is the area .5m or less from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 75% or more of length of the Primary Frontage.	The Primary Frontage is the area .5m or less from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 75% or more of length of the Primary Frontage.
<b>Height</b>	Building shall step back 2m at a height 10m to 25m above grade. The step back is required for 40% of front façade.	Building shall step back 2m at a height 10m to 25m above grade. The step back is required for 40% of front façade.	Building shall step back 2m at a height 10m to 25m above grade. The step back is required for 40% of front façade.	Building shall step back 2m at a height 10m to 25m above grade.
				
<b>Parking Placement</b>	Parking shall be set back a minimum of 7m from front property line unless screened by a building façade.	Parking shall be set back a minimum of 7m from front property line unless screened by a building façade.	Parking shall be set back a minimum of 7m from front property line unless screened by a building façade.	Parking shall be set back a minimum of 7m from front property line unless screened by a building façade.
<b>Special Features</b>				

	Spadina Crescent	City Park South of Queen	College Drive	Riversdale 20th Street Area	Broadway
Zoning Areas	M4	RM5	AG, M2	B5C	B5B
Primary Frontage					
	Minimum front setback is 6m. The Primary Frontage is the area 6-8m from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 60% or more of length of the Primary Frontage. Porches & porticos may project up to 4m from the Primary Frontage into front setback.	Minimum front setback is 6m. The Primary Frontage is the area 6-8m from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 60% or more of length of the Primary Frontage. Porches & porticos may project up to 4m from the Primary Frontage into front setback.		The Primary Frontage is the area .5m or less from front property line. The Front Façade shall occupy 60% or more of length of the Primary Frontage.	Refer to Bylaws 9056 & 9057
Height					
	Building shall step back 3m at a height 10m to 14m above grade. 	Building shall step back 3m at a height 10m to 14m above grade. 	Building shall step back 2m at a height 10m to 14m above grade. The step back is required for 40% of front facade. 	Building shall step back 3m at a height 10m to 14m above grade. 	Refer to Bylaws 9056 & 9057
Parking Placement					
	Parking shall be accessed from the rear. Parking shall be set back a minimum of 10m from front property line.	Parking shall be accessed from the rear. Parking shall be set back a minimum of 6m from front property line.	Parking shall be accessed from the rear.		Refer to Bylaws 9056 & 9057
Special Features					
	Landscape elements shall be provided along Front Property Line. Landscape elements shall include continuous hedge, shrubs, and/or flowering plants with a min. depth of .4m. Openings shall be required for front access walk.				

## **b. ZONING ADJUSTMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL DISTRICTS WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE**

In addition to the general design guideline strategies, the following are additional targeted adjustments to the current zoning.

### **BUILDING BONUS**

The Plan recommends that a height bonus in the Downtown B6 area be offered when community benefits are incorporated into the development. Such community benefits include underground or structured parking for the building and for use by the general public, and sustainable design practices that have recognition by rating systems such as LEED or BREEAM, and a public community space. The Bonus will allow additional height and/or reduce the correlation of height to land area when the community benefits are met.

### **PARKING STRUCTURE REQUIREMENT**

A building above 40m in height or greater than 5000 square metres in area and will require structured or underground parking that is available for use by both the building and the general public.

### **SURFACE PARKING STATIONS**

Surface parking as a primary use of a property will not be permitted by right within the B6 Zone, but may be allowed as a discretionary use. Existing surface parking lots will be permitted to remain in operation if they comply with screening requirements. New Parking lots created on a temporary basis between demolition of an existing building and construction of a new building on the same site may be approved on a case by case basis. They will not be permitted to operate for a period exceeding two years.

### **OUTDOOR DINING ON SPADINA CRESCENT**

The M4 zoning area has specific regulations for lots adjacent to

Spadina Crescent. Proposed adjustments include allowing outdoor dining in front yards and allowance of individual front entrances for eating establishments.

### **ZONE B6 RETAIL GROUND FLOOR USES**

The Plan recommends that the requirement in the Official Community Plan, section 10.9.10, for retail on the ground floor in the retail core area be amended. The retail core area includes 21 Street and 2nd Ave. The amendment should allow for commercial uses, retail ready shell spaces, as well as retail on the ground floor of the retail core area. The ground floors shall have façade designs compliant with the architectural guidelines of Chapter IV.C.1.c.

### **IDYLWYLD DRIVE**

The current B3 Zone adjacent to Idylwyld Drive may not allow the economic development envisioned in the long term. Increases in building height from 10m to 18m and reducing minimum front building setback to 1m will allow for growth of walkable, mixed-use development in the west Downtown.

### **RAPID TRANSIT PARKING REDUCTIONS**

Zones M4 and B3 within the City Centre are adjacent to potential RT stop locations. Parking requirements in these zones may be reduced once the RT stop locations are confirmed.

### **B5B & DCD1**

There are no proposed adjustments to areas zoned B5B or DCD1.

## c. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

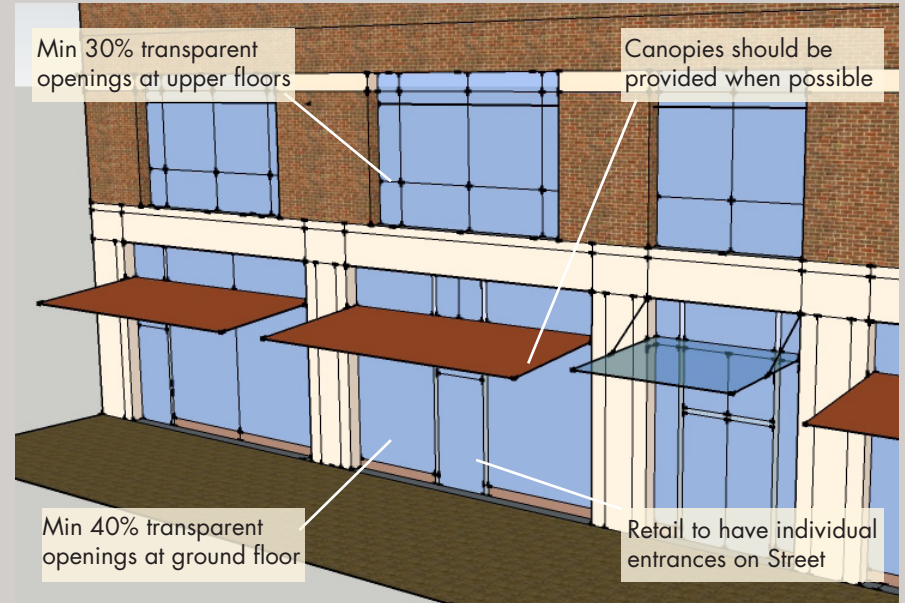
Guidelines for architectural design establish general rules for the façade while allowing flexibility for the private development community. The guidelines allow for a large variety of materials and architectural styles. Variety of architecture is important in order to display the diversity of the City. Extensive regulation of stylistic qualities in a city centre can discourage development. The areas covered by the design guidelines are the divisions of the façade into base, middle, and top; requirements for minimum amounts of transparent openings; limited restrictions on materials. This section also includes examples of high-quality urban residential design. Further detailed architectural regulations on a city-wide basis are not recommended, although more detailed regulations may be appropriate pertaining to specific sites within the City.

### FAÇADE OPENINGS:

To further encourage walkable streets, windowless walls are not permitted to face front property lines or side streets. The guidelines require minimal percentage amounts of transparent openings on ground floors and upper levels. The ground floor front façade shall include a minimum of 40% of its surface area as transparent openings in all areas of the B6 and B3 Zones. The overall front façade of all floors shall have at minimum 30% of the surface area as transparent openings at all locations within the B6 and B3 Zones.

### GROUND LEVEL FRONT ENTRANCES

Ground floor entrances should face the street when possible. Individual stores should have individual entrances to the street. Canopies and awnings should be encouraged to deflect cold winds during the winter months and protect portions of the sidewalk from snow.



IV.C.4 Architectural Design Guidelines



IV.C.5-6 Colourful facades in Copenhagen and Stockholm

## MATERIALS & COLOUR

Proposed architectural design guidelines do not require extensive limitations on materials or colours for the City Center. High-quality architectural design can be accomplished with a wide variety of materials including masonry, metals, glass, and composites. Limiting the range of accepted materials will not insure high-quality architecture. Certain materials associated with low-cost construction, such as vinyl siding and standard grades of cement block, are discouraged on facades that face a public right-of-way. Colour has been used in many northern cities to animate the urban environment and compensate for the short daylight hours in the winter seasons. In the Warehouse District, which consists mostly of all brick buildings, new structures should have brick on at least 30% of their exterior.

## DIVISIONS OF THE FACADE

Proposed architectural design guidelines encourage buildings to have changes of architectural expression of the façade to create a distinct base, middle, and top. This strategy is encouraged for several reasons. The most successful city skylines are characterized by the tops of their buildings. Some of the greatest walking streets are characterized by the quality of design of the ground floor facades. Examples of how buildings can have distinct base, middle, and top portions of their facades are illustrated for a variety of conditions. The examples include a distinct type of expression at the ground floor of a building, the use of a slightly different expression such as a change of materials or window proportion for the body or middle of the building, and then articulation that distinguishes the top. On low buildings of two to four stories, the base can be the lower portion of the ground floor and the top may be a cornice. On a taller building, the base may be an entire floor or two, and the top may be an entire floor or more.



Figures IV.C.7-9:  
Three parts to the facade:  
Base, Middle, Top



## EXAMPLES OF URBAN RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

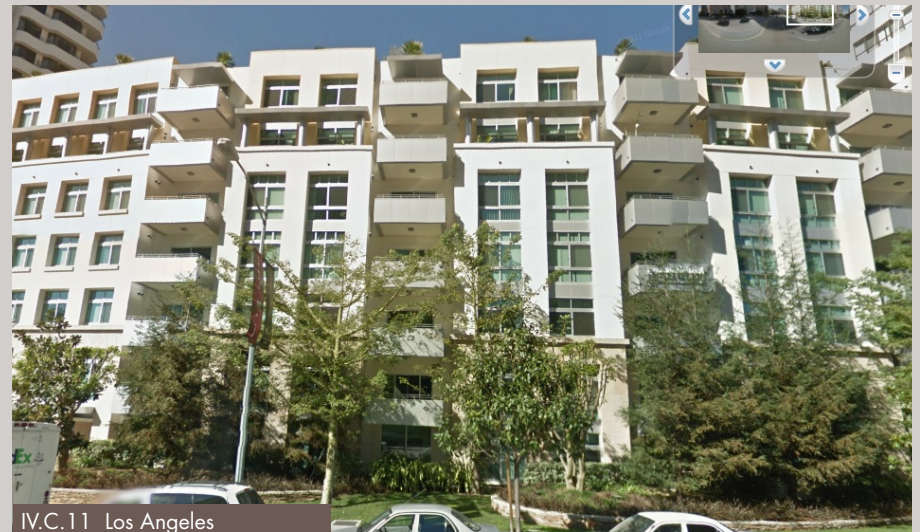
Both mixed-use and residential building types should be considered as components of the neighbourhoods. Detailed architectural design standards that ensure high-quality architecture of these buildings often prove too limiting to allow for the wide variety of housing types that are needed. The following are examples of residential and mixed-use building types that support the overall neighbourhood framework. They are individual, of many styles, accommodate a diverse set of family types and income levels, and yet all provide high-quality public fronts and streetscape. They are accommodated in all portions of the Plan according to the design guideline chart.

### APARTMENT BUILDINGS & CONDOMINIUMS

Apartment buildings can vary in size from four dwellings to several hundred. These buildings should have some level of modulation including bay windows, balconies, and varied rooflines to reflect the residential scale of their purpose. Parking is encouraged in the rear, below grade, or in a structured garage behind the building. Their setback requirements vary depending on the neighbourhood in which they are located but generally are shallow.

### TOWN HOUSES

Town houses are highly efficient building types that allow families a sizable home within the City. They often have large windows and stoops on the front and shallow front gardens. The town houses should have parking access from the rear and not on the front. These may be most appropriate in areas of City Park and Riversdale.



## C.2 RESIDENTIAL INCENTIVES

### **KICK-START PROGRAM**

The overall Plan is designed to use market forces to build new residential uses within the City Centre area; however, it may be necessary to provide added incentive to initiate residential construction in areas that are not widely recognized as residential. One method to do this is to provide a subsidy to developers for each dwelling sold during a proposed three-year period. When the residential market becomes established, the subsidies are no longer needed to attract continued residential growth. One example is the City of Edmonton which provided a subsidy of \$4,500 for each dwelling sold. The program led to an increase of 1,000 new residential units over three years. The additional tax revenue generated by the new residents paid for the cost of the original subsidy.

### **DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

The City may establish a Downtown community association in order to recognize its new and emerging neighbourhoods. The association will allow residents to have a forum to support residential needs and provide community-based programming. The association may support or advocate for community services, maintenance of residential areas, and other residential concerns.

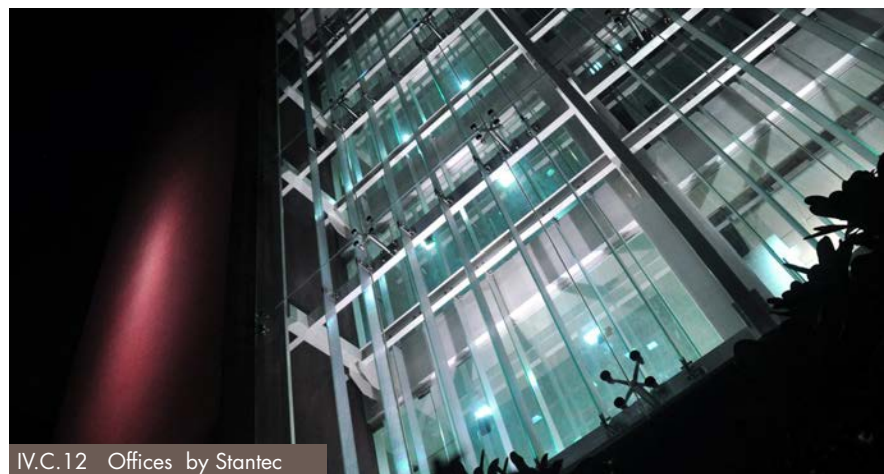
### **GROCERY STORE**

Residents require convenient access to groceries. There are currently no large grocery stores within the Downtown, because large and moderate size grocery stores require a substantially greater number of residents in their immediate service area in order to operate than currently exist within the Downtown. In order to attract a grocery store to the Downtown and to make the City Centre more appealing to prospective residents in the near-term, the City will likely need to develop specific policy measures to promote this type of use. In the long-term, market demand from the increased residential population should allow a larger grocery store to be self-sustaining. The North Downtown Plan will identify potential store locations that can serve residents as well as commuters. These locations may be in the vicinity of 25th Street and Idylwyld Drive.

## C.3 OFFICE INCENTIVES

The Plan provides several incentives to encourage growth of office uses. More structured parking facilities to serve local businesses will be constructed as a result of the parking strategies; discussed in detail in Chapter III.C.4. Long-term transit improvements will also serve business. The higher quality living environment of the City Centre and greater variety of activities, which are discussed throughout this document, will encourage the growth of a highly skilled residential population and work force and help with employee retention. Businesses will have a variety of venues in which to meet and conduct business.

Further fiscal incentives include a tax abatement for Downtown office development. The tax abatement would apply to vacant space within a new office building. This will provide relief to landlords who pay tax on vacant space. The abatement for vacant space will reduce the risk to developers who build office space. The abatement will have a duration of two to five years or until the building is at 100% occupancy. The abatement will be reviewed annually. Abatement will only apply for new office development on an existing surface parking lot. A tax abatement may also be included for structured parking.



## C.4 SUSTAINABLE BUILDING DESIGN

Saskatoon Speaks calls for improved sustainable design through several strategies. They include reduced energy, water, and materials consumption. The majority of energy use, water use, and carbon emissions are by buildings. Policies to encourage the inclusion of sustainable building practices by private development have been undertaken by several cities. They involve a combination of subsidies to encourage construction of sustainable practices and mandatory requirements through modified building codes.

### MODIFICATIONS TO THE BUILDING BYLAW

The National Building Code regulates construction standards for buildings. Several cities adopt local building code amendments that allow national regulations to be customized to local needs. Building Bylaw 7306 is Saskatoon's local building code modification. The Building Bylaw may be explored as a means of incorporating higher thermal, lighting, green energy, energy efficiency, water, and stormwater treatment standards into private development. However, revisions should be carefully considered with regard to construction cost. New regulations that require costly construction can discourage private development within the City.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

The Plan recommends that the City create standards for sustainable building practices for their own facilities. As an example, New York City created its own green building standards for all new school construction and municipal office construction. These standards include a broad range of technical requirements that are nearly equivalent to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver rating. Such standards may include adoption of minimum percentage of energy sourced from green energy sources either through purchase of Renewable Energy Credits (REC's) or through installation of green energy systems.



IV.C.13 Saskatoon Riverfront

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection of the City's natural systems is central to its long-term resiliency. The South Saskatchewan River is the primary natural feature of the City. The river is supported by tributaries, natural underground water drainage systems, and the ecology along its banks. The Meewasin Valley Authority has a mandate to protect this system. Sustainable stormwater management practices described in the infrastructure section of this document, the use of native plant species along the banks, and limiting practices that contribute to erosion of the shoreline will protect this natural system. The City should also promote use of resilient plantings that reduce dependence on irrigation.

## C.5 HERITAGE & CULTURE

The area of the City of Saskatoon has been occupied for 8,000 years. The street grid that emerged in the settlement of 1882, the buildings that lined the street, and the pedestrian scale that emerged are still important qualities in Saskatoon today. The City Centre has most of the area's heritage assets and should be a cultural heritage core. The character of the City Centre has changed over recent decades as older buildings have been demolished to create surface parking lots. This trend could continue if further protection of existing heritage buildings is not established. In the City, 30 sites have been designated as Municipal Heritage Sites, five sites are National Historic Sites, and two are listed as Federal Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act sites. An additional 34 sites fall under the City's holding bylaw which prohibits demolition. The City's Strategic Plan 2012-2022 calls for creative methods to showcase the City's built, natural, and cultural heritage. Tax credits and subsidies are available to support the cost of historic preservation from federal, provincial, municipal, and community programs. The City of Saskatoon produced a Heritage Policy and Program Review Report in August 2012 that discusses several methods to increase protection. The City Centre Plan recommends the following:

### **HISTORIC REGISTER**

Expand the number of assets listed on Saskatoon's Register of Heritage Buildings.

### **MODIFICATIONS TO THE BUILDING BYLAW**

The Plan recommends Building Bylaw 7306, Saskatoon's local building code overlay of The National Building Code, be modified. The Building Bylaw should be explored for amendments to provide accommodation for adaptive reuse of heritage assets.



## **AREAS OF HERITAGE INTEREST**

Designate areas that have groupings of heritage asset as “Areas of Heritage Interest”. Potential areas include Spadina Crescent from the University Bridge to 21st Street, 21st Street, 2nd Avenue between 20th and 24th streets, portions of 3rd Avenue, and the Warehouse District.

## **INCREASED FUNDING**

Provide more funding incentives for protection and restoration of heritage assets.

## **ADAPTIVE REUSE AS SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PRACTICE**

Reuse of existing buildings and materials is recognized by LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) as a highly sustainable building practice. The City should review financial obstacles and investment obstacles to adaptive reuse of buildings.

## **SASKATOON AS A CENTRE OF CULTURE**

The City of Saskatoon’s Culture Plan of 2011 and Strategic Plan cite the many cultural assets already present in the area. The goal of the plans is to establish the City Centre as the central hub for arts and culture in the region. There are several smaller hubs for arts and culture within the City Centre. The area around River Landing already has establishments that are expanding. The Plan offers the opportunity to expand the area directly adjacent to TCU Place for additional cultural venues.

## **OPPORTUNITIES IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

Public infrastructure including streetscape improvements should be reviewed for opportunities to incorporate local craftsmanship and expressions of local culture.

## **ART IN THE CITY**

The Plan envisions further support for art both in public spaces as well as for art incorporated into private development. Venues for affordable art studios should also be accommodated.

## **PUBLIC ART WALK**

An Art Walk is envisioned to celebrate the area’s cultural heritage. The walk will include a plan with suggested walkable routes throughout the City Centre. The walk will link together prominent sites for public artwork, private art venues, institutions, and heritage assets. The walk could display a range of local cultural issues as well as the City’s aspirations for the future. This plan will support tourism of the area as well as link together various art hubs of the City. The artwork along the walk would anchor significant places, and the walk would link varied parts of the City.



IV.C.16 Sculpture

## C.6 STRUCTURED PARKING

The development of new structured parking fulfills a near-term parking need and allows the City Centre to grow. Zoning incentives to construct structured parking as well as restrictions on the growth of surface parking lots are included Chapter 4.C.1.b. However, financial strategies are also required to cover the cost of structured parking. This section discusses the need for parking, the cost of structured parking, and outlines methods to financially support structured parking in the City Centre.

### NEED

The parking demand might be quantified by people's willingness to pay for parking and to walk from a distant parking space. Most parking in the Downtown is paid parking, including at the Midtown Plaza surface lots. While there are no official statistics on the matter, interviews with several employers report some difficulty in hiring new workers due to the lack of places to park. Some employees in the downtown core reportedly walk from lots located several blocks west of Idylwyld Drive to the Downtown.

### SURFACE PARKING

The current conditions of the City Centre allow surface parking lots to operate at a profit. Given the current need for spaces, conversion of surface parking lots to new development will require that the surface parking be replaced by structured parking.

### COST OF PARKING STRUCTURES

Preliminary cost estimates of constructing a new above-grade parking structure in the City of Saskatoon are roughly estimated at \$45,000 per space. In many parts of North America, precast parking structures cost \$25,000 per space. There appear to be a variety of circumstances that cause higher construction costs in Saskatoon. In general, below-grade parking spaces cost more than above-grade parking structures.

## PARKING, TRANSIT AND THE CITY'S GROWTH

In order to increase the amount of development within Saskatoon's City Centre, it will be necessary to redevelop several of the existing surface parking areas. In the near term, the loss of surface parking spaces will not likely be made up by an equal number of people switching to transit. Also in the near term, elimination of surface parking spaces in Saskatoon's City Centre may lead to businesses choosing to locate in suburban areas where parking is ample. As a result, a portion of the surface parking should be replaced with structured parking in order to allow a greater density of development within the City Centre.

The ability of market demand to support the cost of high density infrastructure such as structured parking varies from city to city. The City Centre of Saskatoon is in a transitional period in which the cost of high density infrastructure may not automatically be supported by market demand alone. The near-term demand for parking may need to be filled by efficient, high-density parking structures that are initially supported in partnership with the public sector. In the long-term as density increases, structured parking may be constructed entirely by market demand.

The benefits of constructing structured parking are:

- To allow existing surface parking lots to be redeveloped as mixed-use development
- To support existing businesses and attract future businesses by providing appropriate amounts of parking
- To direct the growth of the City Centre in format that is conducive to walkable streets
- To increase the amount of development that is within easy access of transit stops.

## STRUCTURED PARKING (CONT)

The ultimate goal of structured parking is to create a city that is more conducive to mixed-use development, to walking, and to transit use. Transit ridership is dependent upon having many uses within a close walking distance to a transit stop. Structured parking allows surface parking lots to be transformed and filled with mixed-use development, and therefore places more uses within range of City Centre transit stops. By moving parking from surface lots to structured formats that are removed from view, streets will become lined with more active types of development and be more walkable.

The rate of increase in the need for parking spaces should reduce over time as the City becomes more walkable, as more residents move into the Downtown and walk to work, and as transit service increases. While it will take time for a great number of people to switch to transit, planning for efficient transit systems within the City Centre and along suburban transit corridors should occur in the near-term. Conveying greater numbers of people from the suburbs into the Downtown should focus on increasing transit service and not on major increases in roadway capacity for individual automobiles. To reduce congestion and parking demand, city-wide planning efforts should encourage walkable neighborhoods in the suburbs along Rapid Transit Routes so that a greater number of people can easily use transit. This recommendation is also included in Saskatoon's Integrated Growth Plan.

In summary, the development of structured parking may fulfill a near-term parking need and will allow the City Centre to grow. Well-designed transit and transit-oriented planning will serve the City as the density increases.

## PARKING STUDY

The City's last comprehensive review of parking in the Downtown was completed in 2004. 60% of the persons interviewed during the 2004 study ranked parking as good or average in Downtown Saskatoon. Persons interviewed indicated an interest in the construction of parkades. The economic conditions of the City Centre were different in 2004 and much in the City Centre has changed since then. The public visioning exercise of Saskatoon Speaks, which commented extensively on the prevalence of surface parking lots, had not yet been conducted. The City Centre Plan recommends the City commission an overall Parking Strategy Plan. The elements of the plan should include the following:

- 1) Review of best practices in city-wide parking management and planning.
- 2) Assessment of demand and demand-based parking rates.
- 3) Assessment of near-term need for the City of Saskatoon to provide supplemental high-density parking structures.
  - a. Assess the potential economic benefit to the City of providing structured parking. The economic benefit will assess the additional revenue potential for existing businesses and the transformation of surface parking lots in the vicinity into new development and employment.



- b. Acknowledge reduced ratios of parking demand in the long term due to an increase of mixed-use development and increased use of transit.
  - c. Acknowledge the reduced cost to the City of suburban road construction through the growth of compact, walkable mixed-use areas.
- 4) Devise strategies for the City to associate with new private parking structures that are dedicated to private development projects. The association would be for the purpose of constructing supplemental public structured parking. The strategy will investigate financing methods and public/private partnerships to encourage construction of privately-owned parking structures with surplus parking for public use. It will also investigate opportunities for shared parking.
  - 5) Encourage use of shared parking strategies in which private parking commercial structures that are primarily used during business hours of weekdays can be accessible for public use on weekends and afterhours. Encourage accommodations for bike parking.
  - 6) Identify one or two potential parking structure sites in the Central Business District and develop a financial model for implementing them either through a City funded program, joint venture, or municipally facilitated private investment.
  - 7) Encourage development of one parking structure with public access within each of the 5 minute walking distance neighbourhoods.

### **PARKING STRUCTURE FACADES**

Parking structures should have architectural treatments when facing public streets in order to resemble buildings. Examples of architectural treatments include metal screens and architectural cladding of the structure. Parking structures should have retail uses on portions of ground floor that face the street.



IV.C.18 Garage Austin, TX

Parking structures with screened facades facing street.



IV.C.19 Garage Atlanta, GA

Parking structures are hidden behind liner buildings when facing front property line. Parking structure facing street is clad with architectural features.



# V. IMPLEMENTATION



V.1 Pearl Street Mall Stantec

# IMPLEMENTATION

The overall Plan is envisioned to be implemented in phases. The phases include near-term projects completed in 1-5 years, mid-term projects completed in 5-10 years, and long-term projects completed in 15 years.

Street conversions may be implemented in small phases. Improvements can be started as low impact installations paralleling the New York City's streets improvement program. These included improvement of pedestrian areas and cross walk zones with painted ground surfaces and plant installations. These can be installed quickly at lower cost. Over time, as funds are available and as the improvements are tested for use, the improvements can be constructed into more formalized designs. Examples of these installations are included Chapter IV.B.8.

## **NEAR TERM PROJECTS 1-5 YEARS**

1. Implement improvements to 21st Street including crosswalks at 1st Ave, the length of 21st street and across Spadina Crescent
2. Implement seasonal parking area conversions
3. Implement seasonal alley conversions
4. Develop a green network, rain garden master plan
5. Implement initial phase of linear park at 21 Street and Spadina Crescent
6. City Hall Square Design Considerations: complete design drawings for improved landscape at City Hall Square area.
7. Implement improvements to 23rd Street including initial phase of linear park at 23rd Street and Spadina Crescent. Complete design plans for new entry to Meewasin Trail
8. Complete design drawings for 1st Ave and Idylwyld Drive.
9. Detailed bike lane plan to be completed in accordance with information provided by CCP
10. Completion of IGP and establishment of first phase of RT Line as a Bus Only lane
11. Design & construction of bike lanes and bridge access ramps
12. The Parking Strategy Plan to be commissioned and completed
13. Construction of new parking structure in CBD
14. Expansion of Heritage Register and identification of Heritage Districts
15. Review of Building Bylaw for heritage needs and sustainable design needs
16. Identify catalyst project on 20th Street in Riverdale
17. Review Zoning Bylaw for inclusion of information provided by CCP

## **MID-TERM PROJECTS 5-10 YEARS**

1. Installation initial phase street improvements at 19th, 20th Streets, Western portion of 23rd, 26th Streets, portions of 3rd Ave and 4th Ave, Spadina Crescent. See pages 29-58
2. Reconstruction of 1st Ave
3. Reconstruction of Idylwyld Drive
4. Full Implementation of College Drive, Broadway, and 20th Street improvements
5. Implementation of City Centre wide Public Art Walk
6. Installation of rain gardens where appropriate
7. Conversion of street lights to LED and task-oriented design where appropriate
8. Implementation of public/private parking structure funding program
9. Recruit grocery store operator to Downtown and/or North Downtown area

## **LONG-TERM PROJECTS 5-15 YEARS**

1. Construction of mixed-use development in area between Idylwyld Drive and 1st Ave.
2. Final Construction of street improvements at 19th, 20th Streets, Western portion of 23rd, 26th Streets, portions of 3rd Ave and 4th Ave, Spadina Crescent
3. Implementation of City Hall Square and Civic Plaza
4. Bridge Construction Projects
5. Installation of final phase of all identified pedestrian priority streets

# GLOSSARY

**Adaptive Reuse:** using a building for an activity other than what it was designed for, often as a strategy for historic preservation.

**Amenities:** Social and economic facilities and services that increase comfort in a community. These include recreational and health care facilities, shops, restaurants, supermarkets, transit, public spaces, recreational opportunities, entertainment venues, and daycare centres, among others.

**Demographic:** A term used to describe the population of a place or territory. It refers to figures, images, and data pertaining to the characteristics and composition of the population. This may include age, gender, ethnicity, religion and other socio-economic status information.

**Dedicated Bike Lane:** Demarcated lanes marked with side strips, bike lane signage and icons, and often continuously coloured surface paint so that they are clearly not for use by motorized vehicles. Dedicated bike lanes are often placed directly adjacent to sidewalk curbs with a protective buffer area adjacent to the parallel parking lane. Examples of similar systems include Copenhagen and New York City.

**District Heating:** System for distributing heat generated in a centralized location for multiple residential and/or commercial heating requirements such as space heating and water heating. The source of energy may be derived from traditional methods, co-generation, and clean energy sources.

**Green Spaces:** Undeveloped land preserved in a natural state or land developed for outdoor recreation uses (for example, parks, woodlands, conservation areas or waterfronts), depending on the land's characteristics.

**Grey Water:** Wastewater that has been used in the home, including dish, shower, sink and laundry water, and excluding water from toilets (referred to as black water).

**Infrastructure:** Municipally-owned facilities such as water and sewer systems and treatment facilities, roads, sidewalks, bridges, civic buildings, land, street lights, transit buses, etc. Infrastructure may also include privately-owned utility facilities and equipment that provide power, gas, telephone, and cable television to the municipality.

**Light Rail Transit (LRT):** An electric railway system that provides fast and efficient transit service. A form of rapid transit.

**Mixed-use:** Existing or proposed development comprised of more than one complementary land use, either in the same building, in separate buildings in close proximity, or in a district. The mix of land uses may include residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional uses.

**Multi-modal Transportation:** Mobility systems that account for various means of transportation such as public transit, walking, biking, and personal vehicles. This includes planning for the connections and synergies among various modes that play a role in the overall transportation system.

**Neighbourhood:** A neighbourhood is a place where people live, but also includes a mix of uses. They allow for diversity in housing types, culture, income, and uses. A neighbourhood has a series of consistent physical design characteristics and an identified centre such as a public space or building. They have a limited size of a 5-minute walking distance radius (400m) from the centre to the edges.

**Pedestrian Priority Street:** A pedestrian priority street is not a street that eliminates cars or trucks, but one that provides balance between pedestrians and vehicles. These streets have walkable design features, encourage pedestrian-oriented economic development, place making, and enhanced neighbourhood identity while accommodating vehicles.

**Rapid Transit:** A mass transportation system that has a high capacity and frequency, and is often physically separated or provides advantages over other modes of traffic in order to increase efficiency.

**Redevelopment:** New construction or creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including brownfield sites.

**Sustainability:** The World Commission on the Environment and Development (1987) defines sustainability as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

**Sustainable Development:** A pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come.

**Shared Parking:** These are parking facilities that are shared by different users that do not have the same demand periods. These reduce the overall amount of parking spaces required in an area.

**Step Back:** The condition of a building façade when its upper floors are placed further away from the property line than the lower floors.

**Transit-oriented development (TOD):** High density and mixed-use residential and commercial areas at transit nodes and along transit corridors designed to maximize access to public transportation. TOD will often incorporate features to encourage transit ridership.

**Urban Design:** Application of architectural and planning principles to the design of buildings and spaces with the interest of the public and the community in mind. Concern is given to building form, style and materials, views and vistas, open space and streetscapes to create a setting that is functional, aesthetically pleasing and respects and contributes to the urban setting and context in which the design is being placed.

**Urban Thoroughfare:** A Street that allows pedestrian activity along its edges while also allowing significant volumes of traffic. Examples of thoroughfares include Boulevards in Paris which are lined with shops, have clearly demarcated crossing points, and yet also have several moving lanes of traffic, accommodate trucks, and high volumes of cars.

**Winter City:** Winter city is a concept for communities in northern latitudes that encourage transportation systems, buildings, and recreation projects to be designed and developed for all four seasons, with particular attention to how they perform during winter.

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