

06

PUBLIC REALM + URBAN DESIGN

IMAGINE
IDYLWYLD



LEGEND

-  Tree
-  Median Planting
-  Lawn
-  Park
-  Surface Parking



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OPEN SPACE

Parks and open space, as defined by publicly dedicated lands, are limited to the concentrated parkland along the river corridor, such as River Landing East and Isinger Park. Idylwyld Drive lacks any reprieve for pedestrians and residents as a place of respite between the residential neighbourhoods to the north-west and west and downtown core. Likewise, wayfinding and a sense of where open space is located is lacking along with a visual queue for people passing across or along the corridor.

Plant material is extremely limited with only a few trees planted in raised planters and a small stretch of street trees planted in turf along the edge of the parking lots on the east side south of 22nd Street East. There is no formal arrangement of tree planting or planting zones that currently define Idylwyld Drive.

Given the lack of public spaces along the corridor, one observation was the possibility of developing the public realm in the laneways of Block 3, as well as the abutting parking lot where businesses currently have a prominent back-door address and a "street-like" presence to build a strong sense of place with frequent pedestrian activity.



Imagine Idylwyld: Issues and Opportunities Report

OPPORTUNITIES

Extend the green character from River Landing to create a dynamic planted corridor that frames the right of way with a general planting consistency while providing shade and reducing wind velocity within the public realm

Create a planting scheme defined by hardy, city-tolerant species suited to the four seasons of Saskatoon:

- Street Trees (high canopy, provides shade),
- Low shrubs (typically less than 1 metre which do not inhibit views and visual access for public safety and security)
- Indigenous Grasses and Perennial Prairie plants

Capitalize on the creation of smaller nodes of open space, or parkette conditions, that act as differentiating elements and that help to reinforce the quality of spaces

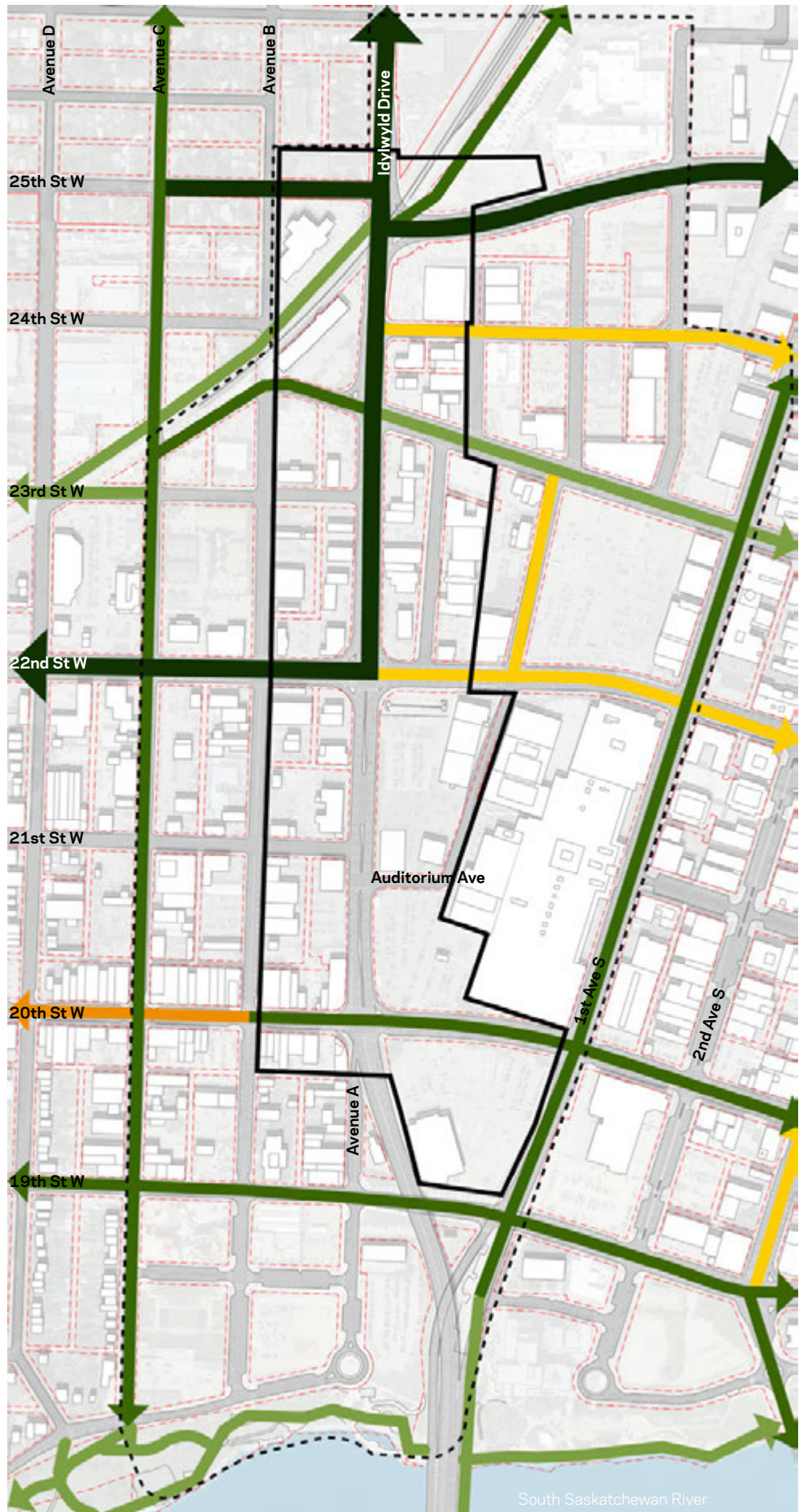
Create larger open spaces near planned rapid transit facilities

Create staging areas for public art and civic elements that may support current events and seasonal displays

Incorporate land art, topographical features or low walls to develop character and help buffer the public realm from traffic noise, pollution, and water and salt spray from passing vehicles

LEGEND

- Multi-Modal Corridor
- Proposed AAA Network
- Existing AAA Network
- Proposed Non-AAA Network
- Existing Non-AAA Network



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CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Bicycle infrastructure contributes a key role in the development of the form and function of the urban framework. Saskatoon has made great strides to develop a robust and connected bicycle network. Cycling infrastructure offers more commuting options for people living in or near the City Centre.

A multi-modal corridor is identified in the Active Transportation Plan along Idylwyld Drive, from 25th Street East to 22nd Street West, and beyond the study area. During the stakeholder workshop, there were many comments about the connections with a small percentage of support to include bike lane infrastructure along Idylwyld. Options and discussion to allocate cycle infrastructure on surrounding routes such as Avenue B were brought forward.

OPPORTUNITIES

Identify potential improvements to the movement and connection of bicycle corridors, both existing and proposed

Within the designated Multi-Modal Corridor, incorporate cycle connections to the existing and proposed AAA Network within the space between new curb lines and property lines or building faces

Provide suitable forms and levels of bicycle parking to match adjacent building and land uses

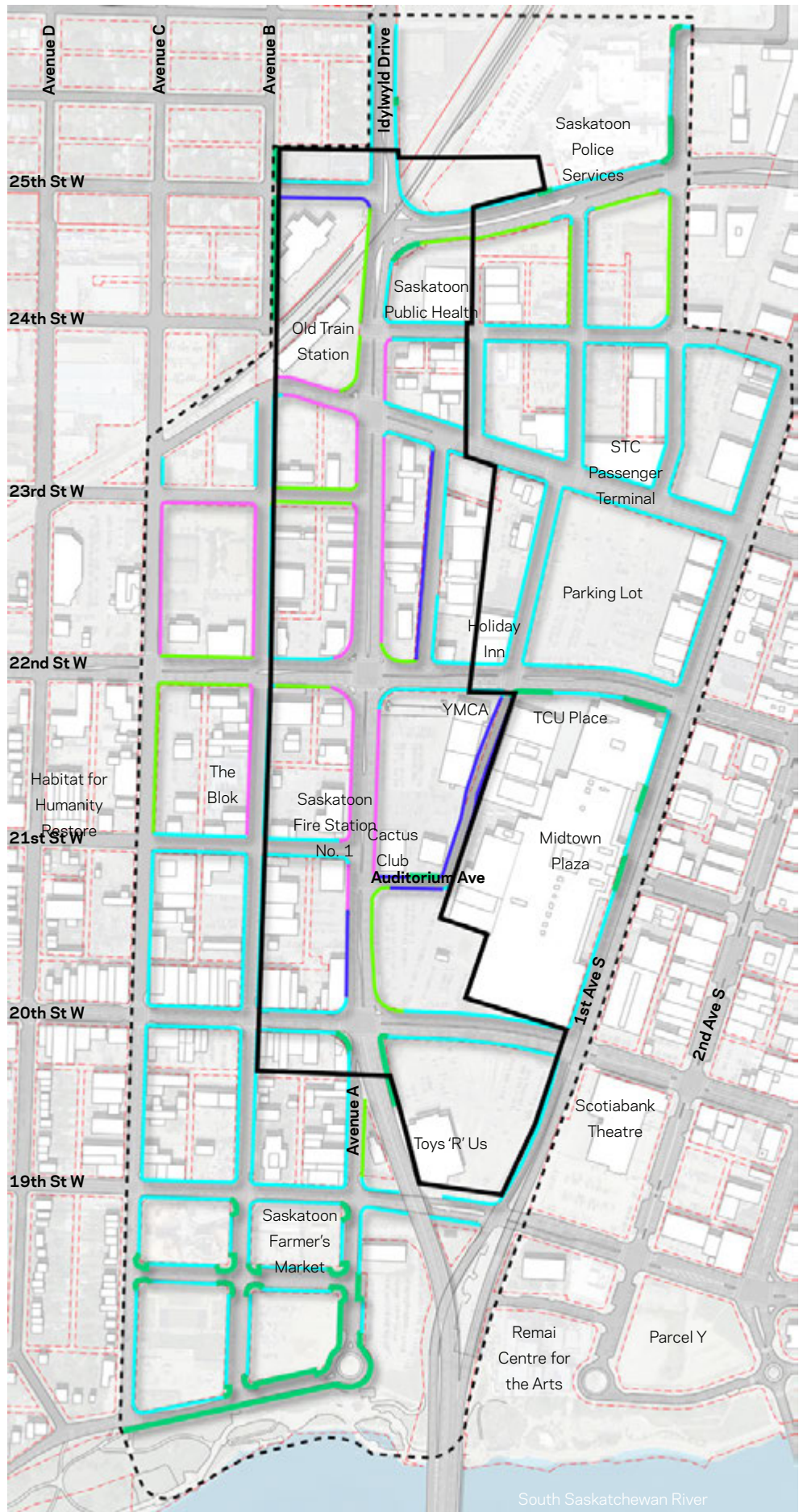
Design bicycle crossings at intersections to minimize exposure and improve cyclist safety

Design bicycle infrastructure improvements to current best practice for winter cities

LEGEND

- Study Area
- Area of Impact
- Sidewalk (Up to 1.5m)
- Sidewalk (1.5m - 2m)
- Sidewalk (2m - 3m)
- Sidewalk (3m - 5m)
- Sidewalk (+5m)

* Sidewalk widths representations do not account for interruptions, such as utilities, street lights, signs and others



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PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

SIDEWALKS, PATHS + WALKWAYS

The general condition for pedestrian routes along Idylwyld Drive is best summed up as hostile. The physical condition is inconsistent in dimension, age, surface-level consistency, objects and barriers impeding direct flow, materiality and conformity of Accessibility Standards and general aesthetic character. Due to the inconsistent nature of the sidewalks and the proximity to the traffic, pedestrians do not feel a sense of safety. Extended dropped curbs at the sidewalk allow easy access for traffic to enter the pedestrian sidewalk zone while slush and water is often splashed onto the entirety of the sidewalk and onto vulnerable pedestrians. Adjacent site design further adds to the inconsistency and hostility of the pedestrian environment with parking lots and fencing pushed up to the sidewalk edge.

Obstacles also pose a safety issue in the public realm. An inconsistency in street furnishings and utilities often appear to have an uncoordinated layout with utility objects such as fire hydrants or light poles entering into the path of pedestrians and in some cases drive ways. Sidewalks are generally constructed of concrete, however in a few instances are comprised of asphalt and in some cases this has failed giving way to pot holes and aggregate on the surrounding surfaces. In a few instances, buildings are exceptionally close to the sidewalk, creating a formidable wall against the public realm.

OPPORTUNITIES

Develop a connected and cohesive public realm by defining:

- Palette of materials
- Colours scheme
- Street furnishings (benches, bike locks, bollards, light posts/standards, storm grates, litter receptacles)

Ensure all new public realm surfaces and amenity spaces in the public realm is barrier free accessible and conforms to current best practice and local codes

Reduce the number of curb cuts into the sidewalk/public realm to create a more consistent corridor that is safer for pedestrians

All design options shall take into account the four seasons by considering integrated storm water solutions within the streetscape and winter and snow operability

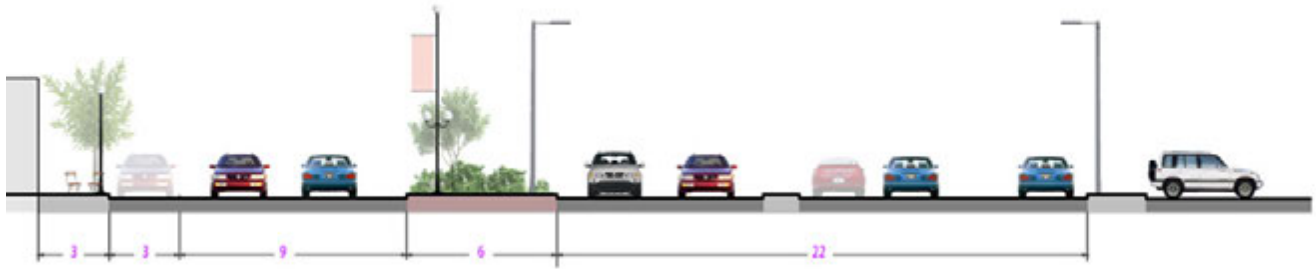


Figure 6.9: Avenue A South Street Section to Idylwyld Drive



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AVENUE A - IDYLWYLD DRIVE EXIT

The north end of Avenue A is a fork in the road, defined by a one-way access for vehicles traveling southbound.

Vehicles traveling northbound are required to turnaround or use mid-block laneways to exit. However, without clear signage or an intuitive street design, drivers may become confused and attempt to exit from the entryway into oncoming traffic.

The pedestrian realm of Avenue A is unique, human scale and friendly. The street edge is well framed by buildings and active storefronts at grade along the west side of the street. A sense of comfortable enclosure is provided as the Sid Buckwold Bridge rises, and the sight and sound of fast moving vehicles becomes increasingly distant.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Review access to Avenue A. Explore closing vehicular access to Avenue A from Idylwyld Drive, and/or creating an improved intersection design
- Create a clear connection to Saskatoon Farmers' Market and River Landing
- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines

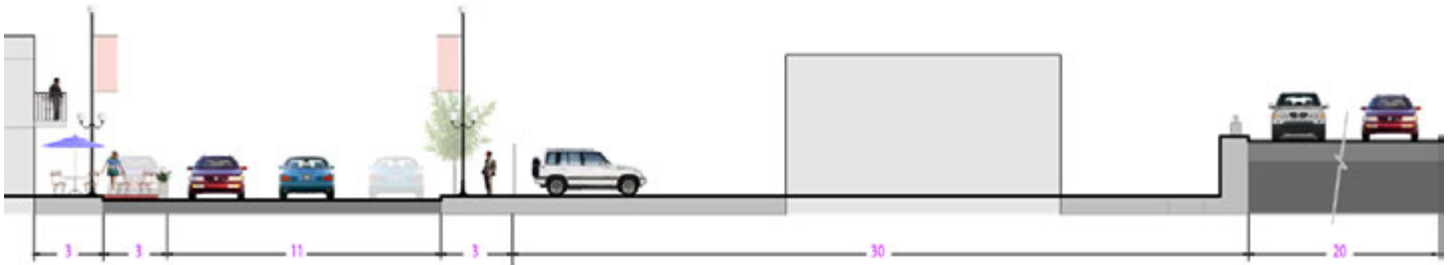


Figure 6.10: Avenue A South Street Section to 19th St West

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AVENUE A TO 19TH STREET

The south end of Avenue A is defined by an active pedestrian realm, driven mostly by the Saskatoon Farmers' Market to the south, and Drift Sidewalk Cafe animating Avenue A on the north-west corner of Avenue A and 19th Street.

Access and circulation for service vehicles is a challenge for the block. Large trucks loading and unloading heavy materials at Garden Architecture & Design, and Michelangelo Marble & Granite occur frequently. The one-way access at Idylwyld Drive creates service circulation challenges; sometimes requiring large vehicles to attempt to turn around or reverse southwards out of Avenue A, if they've arrived to the block via 19th Street.

Sidewalks are generally quite narrow. However, the street has wide vehicle lanes, and on-street parking which could be designed to be more efficient to provide pedestrians more space at this heavily animated street. A pocket parkette patio seems to be quite successful, indicating more pedestrian space would be valuable and utilized at this location.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Create a clear connection to Saskatoon Farmers' Market and River Landing
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines

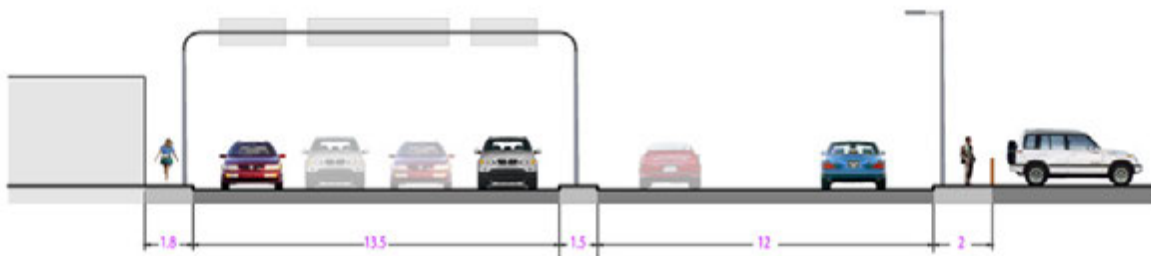


Figure 6.4: 20th Street to Auditorium Avenue Section

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20TH STREET TO AUDITORIUM AVENUE

This section of the study area is a critical intersection to Riversdale, Downtown and northward through the city. Transitioning from highway conditions on Sid Buckwold Bridge, traffic entering this zone must gradually decrease speed to stop at the traffic light. The intersection presents many challenges as pedestrians, cyclists and motorists navigate their route. These challenges include a total of eight traffic lanes with “pork chop” pedestrian islands separating dedicated turning lanes, creating a long distance for pedestrians to cross in a short period of time.

Highway 11 signage gantry on the west side of the corridor reinforces the highway context of Idylwyld Drive and presents a constraint to developing a cohesive human-scaled urban corridor.

There are also many restrictions within the right of way. To the west, building edges are built up to the property line while light, utility and signage poles further impede comfortable passage of two pedestrians. To the east, the Midtown Park surface parking lot is separated from the sidewalk by a low wooden fence that visually constricts the width of the sidewalk and does not allow for any course of escape for pedestrians, making walking unpleasant with a sense of danger.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a gateway condition to Downtown/ Riversdale
- Reduce traffic lanes and crossing distances
- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Create design guidelines for interim and future conditions
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines



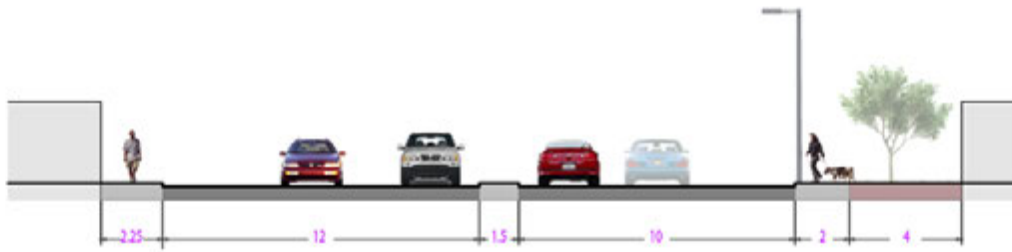


Figure 6.5: Auditorium Avenue to 21st Street Section

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AUDITORIUM AVENUE TO 21ST STREET

The placement of Cactus Club sits comfortably back from the right of way while holding a strong address on Idylwyld Drive. This right of way setback is landscaped with a restrained use of appropriate plant material that is repeated along the restaurant frontage, creating a favourable condition with regular street trees that continue north to 22nd Street. Auditorium Avenue is a popular route for many pedestrians walking to and from Midtown Plaza that creates the need for a better pedestrian crossing condition at the T intersection where Auditorium meets Idylwyld Drive.

On the west of Idylwyld Drive, the pedestrian realm is constricted with only a 2.5 metre setback before the building defines the street edge. Street lights and other obstacles inhibit pedestrian flow on the sidewalk on both sides of the street.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines
- Create consistent street wall edge

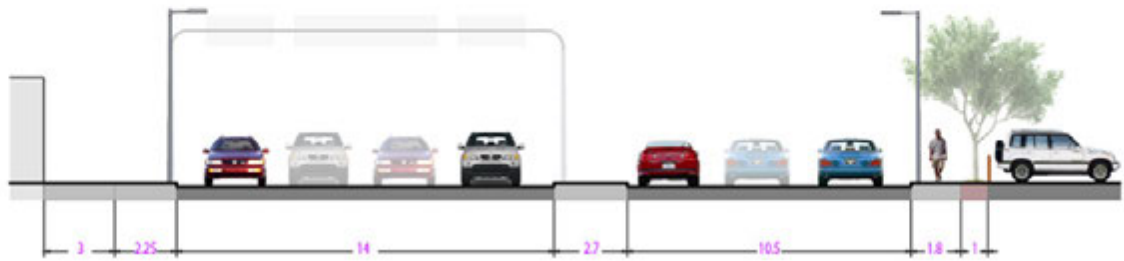


Figure 6.6: 21st Street to 22nd Street Section

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21ST STREET TO 22ND STREET

A row of Ash trees continue north on the east side of the corridor creating one of only two treed conditions along Idylwyld Drive. The Ash trees sit in a strip of turf that defines the edge of the parking lot, however the row ends the half section before 22nd Street.

The west side is defined by the Fire Hall at the 21st Street intersection. Fire trucks exit onto Idylwyld Drive and the setback combined with the extensive drop curb creates an unfavourable pedestrian realm condition. To the north, the Tire Shop and the Home Leisure business have inconsistent setbacks from the curb edge and are surrounded by asphalt with no planting or street trees.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce a consistent urban edge on both sides of the corridor
- Improve, redevelop, or relocate Fire Station No. 1 to reduce pedestrian conflict
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines

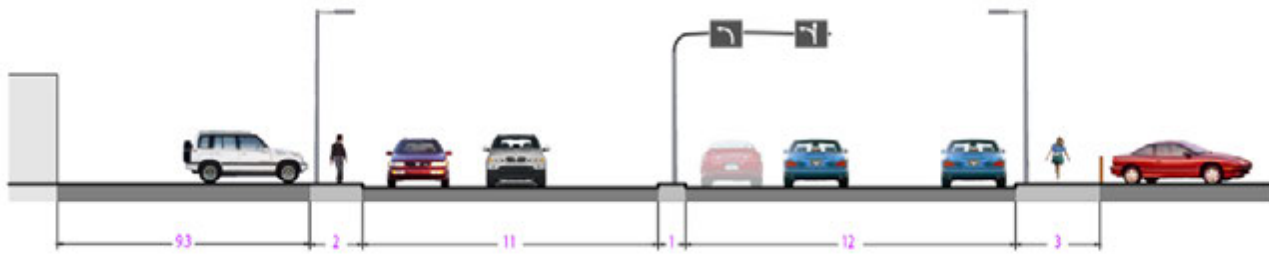


Figure 2.21: Figure 6.7: 22nd Street to 23rd Street Section

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22ND STREET TO 23RD STREET

This section of the corridor is a collection of businesses in buildings with varying setbacks and streetscape conditions. Sidewalks are inconsistent with different materials. Crosswalks create dangerous conditions with inconsistent drop curbs at the pork chop islands between dedicated turn lanes.

Access to and from properties occurs directly off of Idylwyld Drive and from mid-block laneways. Wall Street provides additional access to the rear of properties on the east side of Idylwyld Drive.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Explore consolidating access or reducing access over the long term from Idylwyld Drive
- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines

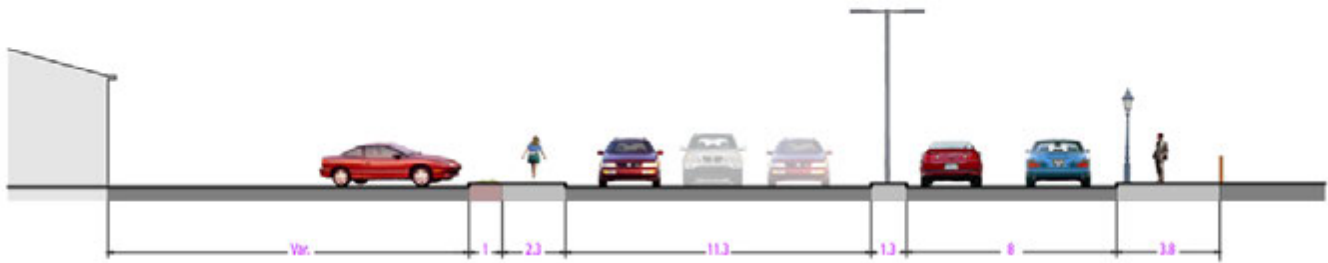


Figure 6.8: 23rd Street to 24th Street Section

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23RD STREET TO 24TH STREET

This section is largely defined by the Jamieson Street and 23rd Street intersection. With the exception of the landmark restaurant Saskatoon Station Place and one retail store, all business cater to automotive services. The restaurant's presence on the south west corner of the intersection is the only building defining the intersection while parking occupies the other 3 quadrants. The public realm is dominated by vehicular traffic and sidewalks. Inconsistent drop curbs and access points to parking lots creates a hostile condition for pedestrians and barrier free mobility.

Most of streetscape is covered with asphalt and concrete sidewalks and has minimal vegetation or planting. Planting on private property is currently done in a piecemeal, non-integrated manner with small planters in front of businesses.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce a consistent urban edge on both sides of the corridor
- Introduce street furnishings that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines
- Create private property planting guidelines
- Connect to, and enhance, the streetscape theming at the 25th intersection
- Improve the irregular configuration of space at the 23rd intersection

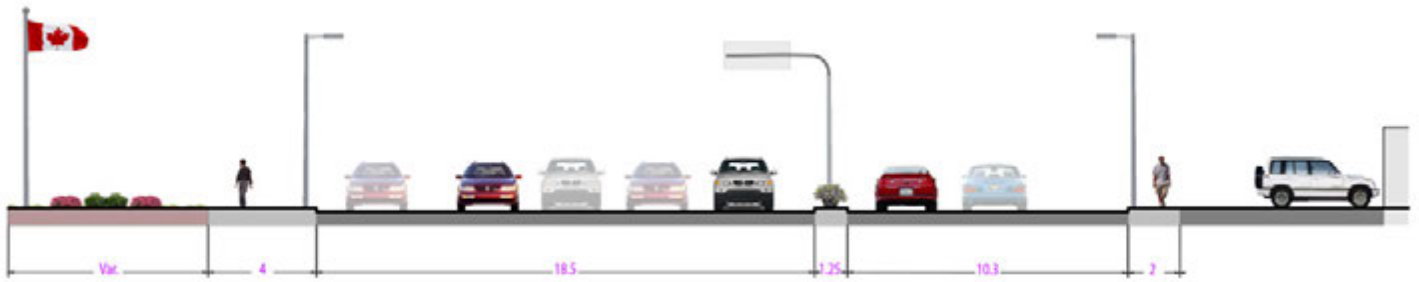


Figure 6.9: 24th Street to 25th Street Section

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24TH STREET TO 25TH STREET

This area has recently undergone streetscape improvements, developing an aesthetic that relates to the railroad history of Saskatoon while paying homage to the ruggedness of the surrounding landscape and wilderness. Pedestrian crossings have been updated and were under construction at the time of the field investigation.

The intersection at 25th Street is defined by a unique and irregular condition with asymmetrical roadway intersection and a railway line splicing diagonally through the intersection. This condition provides opportunities to create interesting view corridors down the rail line.

The recent streetscape improvements have replaced the centre island with a new concrete configuration and sidewalks improvements extend in all directions of this street section.

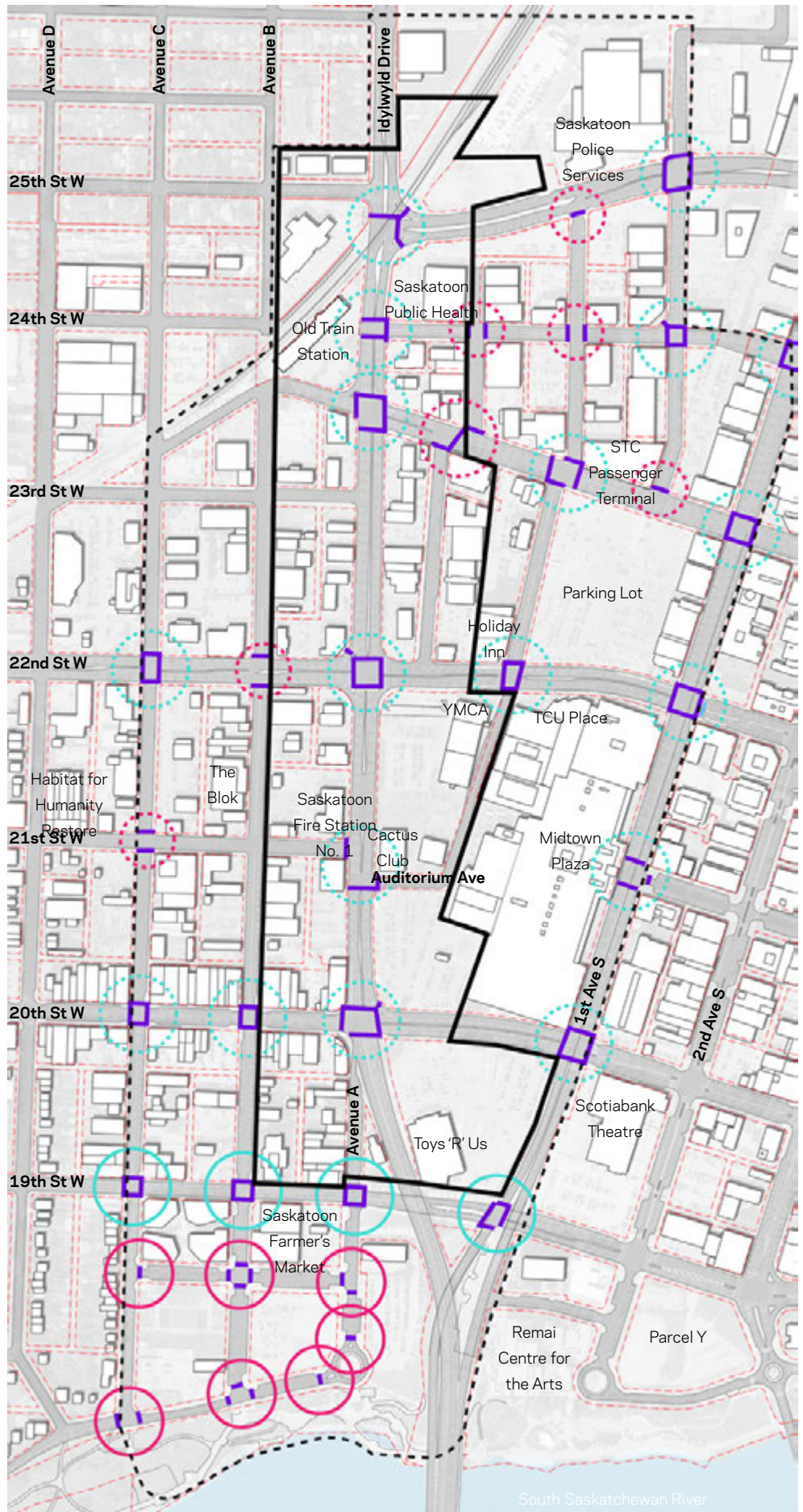


OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Introduce a consistent urban edge on both sides of the corridor
- Introduce streets furnishing that support a cohesive corridor character
- Introduce business and street signage guidelines
- Connect to, and enhance, the streetscape theming at the 25th intersection

LEGEND

-  Marked Crosswalks with Traffic Signal
-  Paver-treated Crosswalk with Traffic Signal
-  Marked Crosswalks without Traffic Signal
-  Paver-treated Crosswalk without Traffic Signal
-  Marked Crosswalks



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CROSSINGS

The *Imagine Idylwyld* study area include 6 primary crossings, each with unique existing conditions and considerations, which are explored in greater detail in the following section.

Crossings along Idylwyld Drive are generally unkind towards pedestrians and cyclists. The highway-scaled and auto-oriented design of the corridor makes crossing difficult and dangerous for elderly or disabled.

The adjacent diagram describes the general conditions and style of each intersection.

OPPORTUNITIES

Reduce traffic lanes to minimize pedestrian crossing distance and time

Add streetscape elements such as trees, plantings, and where appropriate, seating adjacent to intersections to enhance the character and quality of the public realm while adding separation between vehicles and pedestrians

Reduce intersection widths, pedestrian crossing times, and vehicle speeds by reducing the turning radius at corners and extending curbs further into the intersection

Provide safer crossing conditions for cyclists with new infrastructure, such as corner refuge islands, and markings across the intersection

Ensuring there is adequate pedestrian refuge at the ends of crosswalks to enhance the walking environment

Create enhanced pedestrian crossings, through design and materials, to encourage drivers to yield to pedestrians and cyclists

Create accessible crosswalks with signals and cues for the visually and audibly impaired

Improve signalization, timing, and consider other smart technologies

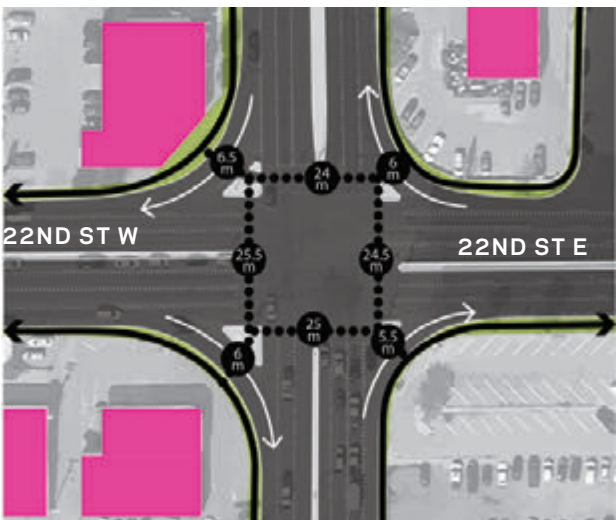
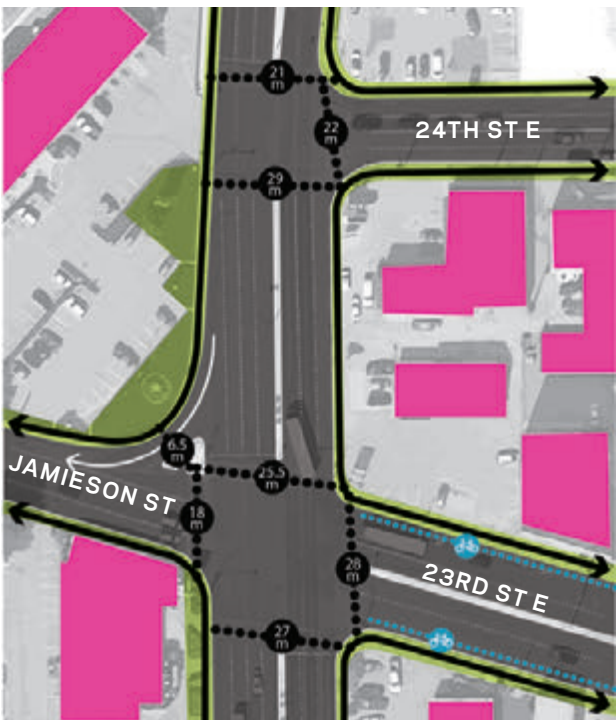
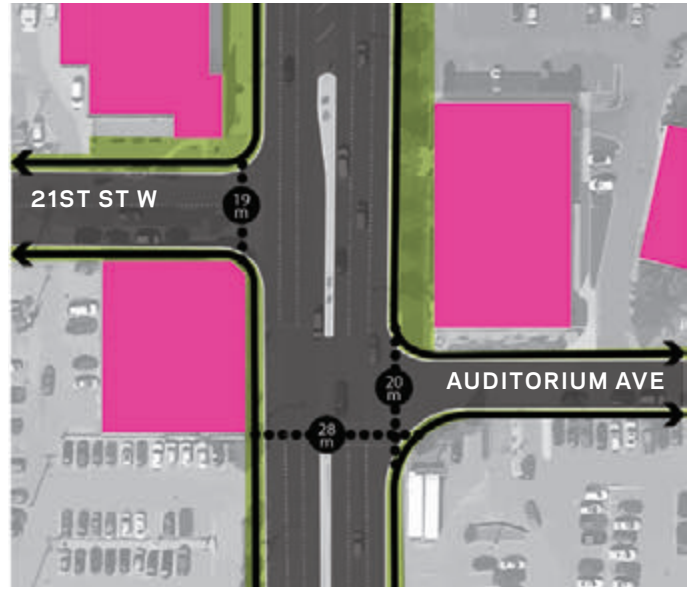
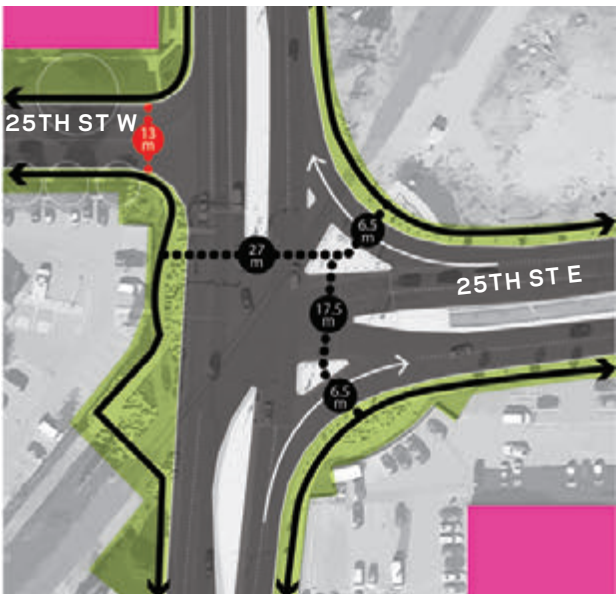


Figure 6.11: Intersection and Crossing Distance Details



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CROSSING DISTANCES

'Pork chop' pedestrian islands provide priority to right-turning vehicles on the majority of intersections along the corridor. This condition is prevalent at 25th Street, Jamieson Street, 22nd Street, and 20th Street. These conditions encourage cars to speed around corners without stopping. It can be also uncomfortable to navigate and dangerous if on foot or a bicycle. They also add unnecessary distance and time to pedestrian crossings with the longest crossing on the corridor measured at 38 m at 22nd Street W.

There is a lack of streetscape elements, including trees, plantings, and seating as well as pedestrian gathering space at streets corners. While there are some green spaces adjacent to a few intersections, many of them are underutilized and not accessible.

Some of the intersections (such as Idylwyld Drive and Auditorium Avenue) lack proper street markings, are not fully utilized, poorly marked, and pedestrian crossing is forced to south side only.

OPPORTUNITIES

Encourage people to walk by creating a safe and inviting pedestrian realm

Minimize pedestrian crossing distance, time and exposure to potential conflicts

Maximize pedestrian visibility while providing design treatments that slow vehicles

Introduce traffic calming measures to allow drivers more reaction time and decrease severity when collisions do occur

SUMMARIZED OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a gateway condition to Downtown/Riversdale
- Improve, redevelop, or relocate Fire Station No. 1 to reduce pedestrian conflict
- Introduce a consistent urban edge on both sides of the corridor
- Reduce traffic lanes to minimize pedestrian crossing distance and time, and increase the width of the public realm to create wider sidewalks, furnishing and planting areas
- Add streetscape elements such as trees, plantings, and where appropriate, seating adjacent to intersections to enhance the character and quality of the public realm while adding separation between vehicles and pedestrians
- Create design guidelines for interim and future conditions.
- Develop a connected and cohesive public realm by defining guidelines: palette of materials; colours scheme; street furnishings (benches, bike locks, bollards, light posts/standards, storm grates, litter receptacles); signage
- Ensure all new public realm surfaces and amenity spaces in the public realm is barrier free accessible and conforms to current best practice and local codes
- Reduce the number of curb cuts into the sidewalk/public realm to create a more consistent corridor that is safer for pedestrians
- All design options shall take into account the four seasons by considering integrated storm water solutions within the streetscape and winter and snow operability
- Reduce intersection widths, pedestrian crossing times, and vehicle speeds by reducing the turning radius at corners and extending curbs further into the intersection
- Ensuring there is adequate pedestrian refuge at the ends of crosswalks to enhance the walking environment
- Create enhanced pedestrian crossings, through design and materials, to encourage drivers to yield to pedestrians and cyclists
- Create accessible crosswalks with signals and cues for the visually and audibly impaired
- Improve signalization, timing, and consider other smart technologies
- Encourage people to walk by creating a safe and inviting pedestrian realm
- Minimize pedestrian crossing distance, time and exposure to potential conflicts
- Maximize pedestrian visibility while providing design treatments that slow vehicles

- Introduce traffic calming measures to allow drivers more reaction time and decrease severity when collisions do occur

CYCLING NETWORK OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide safer crossing conditions for cyclists with new infrastructure, such as corner refuge islands, and markings across the intersection
- Identify any improvements to the movement and connection of bicycle corridors, both existing and proposed
- Within the designated Multi-Modal Corridor, incorporate cycle connections to the existing and proposed AAA Network within the space between new curb lines and property lines or building faces
- Provide suitable forms and levels of bicycle parking to match adjacent building and land uses
- Design bicycle crossings at intersections to minimize exposure and improve cyclist safety, and bicycle infrastructure improvements to current best practice for winter cities

GREEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

- Extend the green character from River Landing to create a dynamic planted corridor that frames the right of way with a general planting consistency while providing shade and reducing wind velocity within the public realm.
- Create a planting scheme defined by hardy, city-tolerant species suited to the four seasons of Saskatoon:
 1. Street Trees (high canopy, provides shade)
 2. Low shrubs (typically less than 1 metre which do not inhibit views and visual access for public safety and security)
 3. Indigenous Grasses and Perennial Prairie plants
- Capitalize on the creation of smaller nodes of open space, or parkette conditions, that act as differentiating elements and that help to reinforce the quality of spaces
- Create larger open spaces near planned rapid transit facilities
- Create staging areas for public art and civic elements that may support current events and seasonal displays
- Incorporate land art, topographical features or low walls to develop character and help buffer the public realm from traffic noise, pollution, and water and salt spray from passing vehicles