

planning + design



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Message from the Director

Too Much Planning?

In 2015, a reporter came to our office and expressed how much trouble they were having keeping track of all the things that were going on. It was in reference to all the plans which seemed to be in progress at the same time. Welcome to high growth. I agree you can't plan everything, but at the same time, you can never be too prepared.

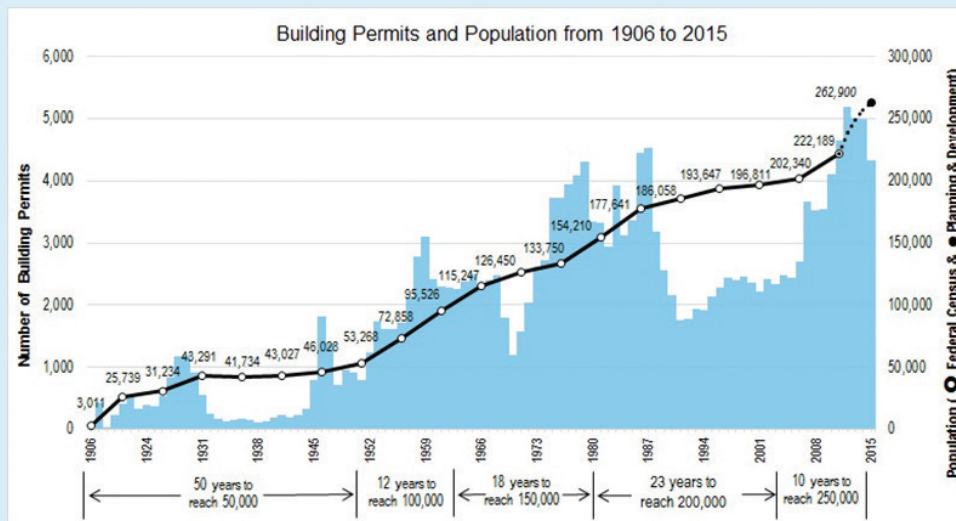
Things have slowed down somewhat, but that seems to be affecting the development in new areas, mainly. Most people are quite optimistic about the future and are speculating about when the upturn will start. This year seems to be an excellent time to execute many projects which have been waiting for costs to subside and labour to be more available. Based on the number of applications received for rezoning, subdivisions, and more, there are plenty of projects which are getting started in anticipation of a return to high growth.

But what about this notion of over-planning? Below is a partial list of the more significant plans which are completed or in progress:

- Growth Plan to Half a Million
- Regional Plan
- Pleasant Hill Village
- Infill Strategy
- Financing Growth
- Parking Strategy
- North Downtown Plan
- Active Transportation Plan
- New Urban Design Policy
- Plan to Address Homelessness
- City Centre Plan
- Idylwyld Drive Master Plan

This list could go on. Is it any wonder that there has been more reliance on consultants over the past 24 months? Looking at the list, it is clear that each one of these is important to a growing city. It is also indicative of the diverse range of issues and needs which City Council has to deal with. We will all look back at this time period as the turning point where Saskatoon made choices about what kind of big city it wants to become.

Growth and change will happen in Saskatoon whether we plan for it or not. We have 110 years of evidence that strongly suggests Saskatoon is not going to stop growing. The chart below is that evidence:



There are plenty of reasons to believe that growth is assured. What has changed, however, are the expectations within the community. More people are concerned Saskatoon is growing in an increasingly unsustainable way. Added to this is the desire for more options. More options are required to accommodate a more diverse and aging population. Saskatoon is crossing a threshold into a new era where urbanism, mixed use environments, well-designed and strategically located density, and public transportation are the most important issues to be considered.

City Council made a significant shift in its governance model in 2015, and the way it handles and considers issues on the public agenda. This was significant because it moved us away from a small city way of decision making into a big city model. We now need to do the same thing with our development policies. This transition starts by planning for it and assessing our state of readiness to become a big city.

Alan G. Wallace, MCIP

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Growth Plan to Half a Million: www.growingfwd.ca

Seasonal Planter Program: A Fresh Start to the Summer

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“The planters add a lot of beauty to our streets and I really enjoy the variety and design of the plantings.” – **Marilyn Gould, Saskatoon resident**

The City of Saskatoon first implemented the Seasonal Planter Program in 1990 as a pilot project, requested by the Downtown Business Improvement District. Their desire was to beautify the core business districts including Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale. The addition of seasonal planters creates a portable landscape that provides instant colour in our public spaces.

Planters were originally placed in only the Downtown; however, planters are now placed to enhance public spaces throughout the Downtown, Riversdale, Broadway, and Sutherland Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), as well as River Landing. Today, the City of Saskatoon Planning and Development Division partners with the Parks Division, Environmental & Corporate Initiatives Division, Saskatoon Transit, and four BIDs to coordinate and implement the program annually between the end of May and mid-September, weather permitting.

The program has grown and evolved over the years with improvements in efficiency, quality, and quantity. There are currently 736 pots in inventory. Locations are chosen based on several criteria, including preference to visually appealing locations that offer high pedestrian traffic volumes, while avoiding obstacles and challenges. Maintenance staff must be able to water the flowers safely and efficiently by water truck, utility vehicle, or with a water hose on a reel.

The first planters were an oak barrel style, however these planters endured a lot of wear and tear from transport on and off site and soon began leaking too much. Today, there are two styles of

planters that are used. A more durable, custom designed, black polyethylene planter was introduced in 2002, and a new planter style was introduced and tested in 2012. The black planters require flowers to be watered on average two or three times a week, while the newer planters have a large reservoir that can hold up to 125 litres of water. The new planters require less frequent watering as they are filled every two weeks; however, there are a slightly limited variety of plants that are suitable to be planted in them.

Location maps and planter combinations are prepared during the off-season. In late May, installation crews drop off the planters, with a planting crew and watering crew following shortly behind. Plants are grown from both rooted plant plugs and seed in the Parks Division greenhouse, and are chosen for disease and pest resistance, low maintenance, continuous colour, and ability to withstand severe climatic conditions. Plants are maintained and watered throughout the season by Parks staff, BID ambassadors, or BID contractors.

Even though the seasonal planter program has been a huge success, it does continue to endure challenges. Due to the desire to continue to grow the program, the planters have begun to reach their off-season maximum storage capacity and planting capacity in the Parks Division greenhouse. Overall, the seasonal planter program is widely loved by the community, and continues to receive praise from residents and visitors alike.



Tree Tags on 21st Street

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Street trees are an important part of our key commercial streetscapes Downtown. They provide a lot of benefits: comfort, beauty, energy saving, and connections to nature.

The trees that line 21st Street Downtown range in age from 27 years to nearly 100 years, and are almost all American elm trees.

The underground irrigation system that has supported the 21st Street trees is old and has deteriorated. Replacing the system is costly and would damage the trees. In 2015, the City's Urban Design and Urban Forestry teams collaborated with the Downtown Business Improvement District to find a new way to support the trees. By placing green watering bags—a water reservoir system—around the trees, the BID ambassadors were able to provide needed water to the trees. The watering bags are easy to use; they release water slowly preventing water loss through run-off and evaporation; and they encourage deep root growth by sending water deep into the soil.

While filling the bags, the ambassadors have received many enquiries from the public, asking, "What are those bags for?" Once the ambassadors explained, people were very supportive of the initiative. In response to this interest, Urban Design has developed water bag tags to provide information about the 21st Street trees, including the species, age, and benefits the trees provide.

Eight unique tags will be hung on the water bags for the summer in 2016. See if you can spot them all!



Streetscape Maintenance

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In addition to street redevelopment projects and street amenity programs, the City of Saskatoon Urban Design Team maintains the streetscape features for approximately 80 blocks. Coordinating with numerous other City of Saskatoon departments and divisions, Urban Design leads annual streetscape maintenance inspections, and oversees repairs to the streetscaping throughout the year.



A tree grate and tree guard at River Landing were recently damaged during a motor vehicle accident. The tree grate was repositioned back into place and the tree guard was replaced, as it was damaged beyond repair.

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The City of Saskatoon Business License Program licenses all businesses operating from a fixed address within Saskatoon. This includes all home-based businesses, as well as businesses operating from commercial and industrial locations.

At the end of 2015, there were 10,659 businesses licensed by the Program. Figure 1 illustrates the overall business growth in Saskatoon and identifies the total number of home-based and commercial/industrial businesses licensed from 2011 to 2015. The total number of businesses has increased by more than 11 percent since 2011. Figure 2 illustrates the number of new business licenses issued for the years 2011 to 2015. The number of new home-based businesses continues to exceed the number of new commercial/industrial businesses.

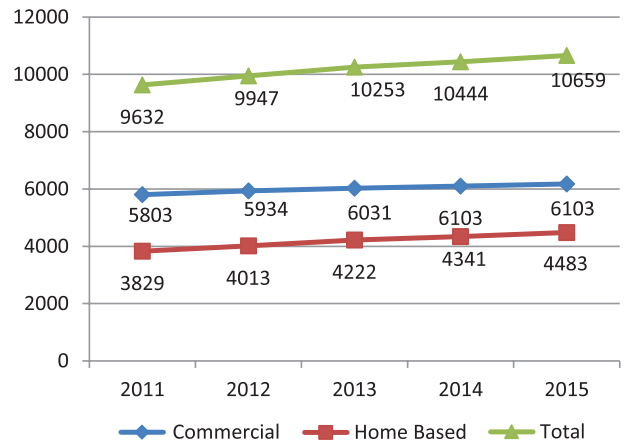


Figure 1: Summary of Total Business Activity

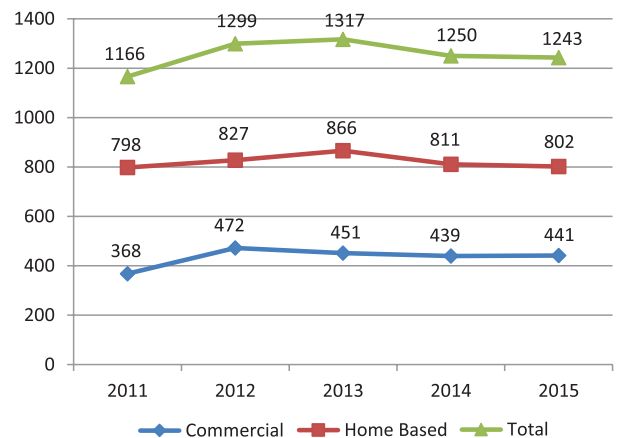


Figure 2: Summary of New Business Activity

For more business license statistics, or to view the Business Profile 2015 Annual Report, please visit www.saskatoon.ca/businesslicense.

Bike to Work Day

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“The popularity of this event has surged and organized events can now be found across the globe.”

How do you travel to work? Have you ever thought about ditching four wheels for two? Bike to Work Day aims to encourage that change. Started in 1956 by the League of American Bicyclists, the purpose of this day is to promote bicycling as an option for commuting to work. By committing to one day of bicycle commuting, it is hoped that participants see the pleasure and ease of incorporating bicycling into their regular commuting routines.

The popularity of this event has surged and organized events can now be found across the globe. Businesses and institutions have also begun to take notice and participate by setting up what San Francisco refers to as “Commuter Convoys,” and “Energizer Stations.” Bicyclists are encouraged to stop at these stations during their commute and refresh with other riders. Prize draws and contests are commonly found alongside free beverages, treats, prizes, and comradery. Politicians and activist groups are regularly in attendance, and use this opportunity to converse with the bicycling communities.

as a station with planners and engineers greeting bicyclists at City Hall. This was a collaborative effort with the Saskatoon Health Region, the Partnership, and Saskatoon Cycles. Treats, coffee, and prizes were handed out throughout the morning.

Bike to Work Day’s lesser known counterpart is International Winter Bike to Work Day. The event itself consists of much of the same, but instead of encouraging general bicycling, the focus of this initiative is to encourage winter riding, something often associated with “hardcore” bicyclists. Through awareness campaigns, demonstrations and education, organizers aim to catch those that regularly bike during other months, but feel that they may not be “hardcore” enough for wintertime riding. A group of City staff planned a station for Feb. 12, the international date, which featured treats, coffee, and prizes. Two weeks before, a Winterize Your Bike Session was held for City employees. Representatives from the Bridge City Bicycle Co-op and Saskatoon Cycles showed attendees how to winterize both their bicycles and themselves.

We are looking forward to participating in both events again this year.



Bike to Work Day Station at City Hall

Saskatoon’s first annual Bike to Work Day took place in 2013. Organized by the Bridge City Bicycle Co-op, bicyclists were encouraged to stop by one of four commuter stations for free baking, fruit, and water, provided by local sponsors. Since then, the event has grown significantly. In 2015, 15 commuter stations were active on Bike to Work Day. Coffee shops, offices, shops, a clinic, and even a brewery set up around Saskatoon to keep riders’ energy levels up. It was also the first year the City of Saskatoon participated

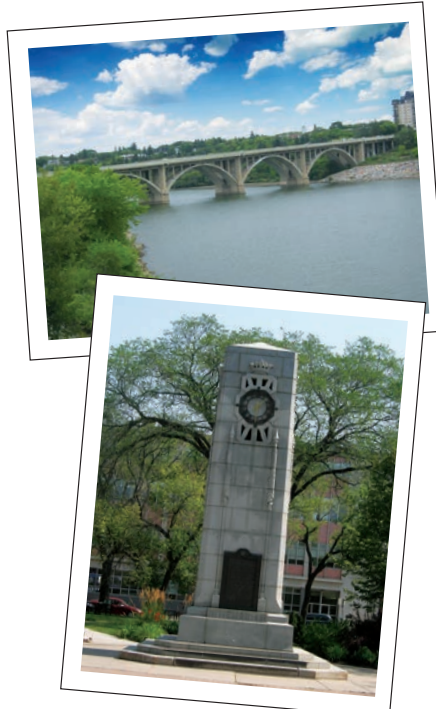


Bike to Work Day Station at City Hall

SASKATOON
 Register of
HISTORIC PLACES

A semi-annual look at the heritage resources that have helped shape our community and tell the story of Saskatoon.

Broadway Bridge - The Broadway Bridge is a significant historic landmark in Saskatoon. The plan for the City's third bridge was initiated in 1926 by the Town Planning Board and J. E. Underwood, an alderman who became Saskatoon's mayor by the time the bridge was completed. The bridge was designed by engineers from the University of Saskatchewan, and was built by the City in partnership with the federal and provincial governments as a make-work project during the Great Depression. It was finished in just 11 months, opening on Nov. 11, 1932. A total of 1,593 men worked around the clock to build it. The Broadway Bridge's simple yet bold design, at the end of one of Saskatoon's most prominent streets (Broadway Avenue), makes it an important landmark within the City of Saskatoon.



Cenotaph - The Cenotaph was built as a symbol of sacrifice, and its purpose was two-fold: to memorialize those from Saskatoon and the surrounding area who fought but did not return from war, and to remind Saskatoon citizens of the sacrifice these individuals made for their country. The four-sided monument was constructed of Vancouver grey granite obtained by the Western Granite and Marble Co. The step base holds the words "In Memoriam." The Cenotaph has served as a point of ceremony for many war-related memorial events and as a rallying point for civic events, including civil protest. Today, the Cenotaph continues to be a familiar and beloved landmark of the City.

The heritage resources outlined above are part of the Saskatoon Register of Historic Places (Register). The Register is an official listing of heritage resources identified by the City of Saskatoon as having significant heritage value or interest. It includes buildings, structures, monuments, memorials, and natural and cultural landscapes. For more information please visit www.saskatoon.ca/heritage.

Dream Maker: A look at Saskatoon's Public Art Collection

Public art in Saskatoon can be traced back to 1921 with the unveiling of the six foot high monument to Sgt. Hugh Cairns, V.C., the only known war memorial dedicated to soccer players who lost their lives in World War I. Since that time, public art has made a significant contribution. Public art encourages public involvement and appreciation of the arts through opportunities that are freely accessible. The quality of life for all citizens is improved by creating a visually rich environment that reflects our diverse character.

The City of Saskatoon has a permanent collection of 42 public art pieces and a temporary collection under the Placemaker Program, which includes 13 (as of spring 2016).

In 2015, artist Floyd Wanner donated *Dream Maker* to the City of Saskatoon's permanent public art collection. *Dream*

Maker was part of the temporary collection from 1997 to 2005 and was located at the southeast corner of 20th Street and Idylwyld Drive. Wanner's sculpture, which measures



more than 10 feet high, seven feet long, and almost three feet wide, was carved from stone recovered from City Hall's expansion in the 1980s. *Dream Maker* is located at 20th Street and 1st Avenue.

The artist's statement for the sculpture is: "Before your dreams float away, reach out and grab hold. Be your own dream maker."

The Public Art Collections can be viewed through iMap at saskatoon.ca/publicart.

For more information about the Public Art Program, contact Alejandro Romero, Arts & Culture Consultant, at 306-657-8671 or alejandro.romero@saskatoon.ca.

For more information about the Placemaker Program contact Genevieve Russell, Urban Design Manager, at 306-975-2620 or genevieve.russell@saskatoon.ca.

City Supports Attainable Housing Projects

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Since 2008, when the City's first comprehensive housing business plan was adopted, the City of Saskatoon has partnered with a variety of housing providers resulting in the creation of 4,265 new units of attainable housing.

Two of the most recent attainable housing projects include a unique partnership with a local youth co-operative, and the second phase of a project that originally dates back to 2007.

Stewart Properties Ltd. – 623 Avenue L South

In May 2015, the City of Saskatoon received an application for financial assistance from Stewart Properties for a one-unit dwelling with a secondary suite. The proposal called for a partnership between Stewart Properties and the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op (CNYC), which serves as a skill building and alternative education program for youth who do not have a secure place to live, and may be staying in shelters or unsafe living situations in Saskatoon. The project accommodates seven young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 who are currently enrolled in the CNYC program, along with a graduate of the program who mentors the young adults.



After public consultation, a 10 percent capital grant and five year tax abatement was approved by City Council in late summer of 2015. Construction of the property began shortly after with CNYC members, who would be staying at the property, pitching in and helping construct their very own home. A ribbon cutting was held on Feb. 24, 2016, joining all providers together to welcome the CNYC members to their new home.

Saskatoon Housing Coalition – 323 Camponi Place

In June 2015, the City of Saskatoon received an application from the Saskatoon Housing Coalition (SHC) for Phase 2 of

their development at 323 Camponi Place. The SHC is a non-profit organization that provides transitional housing in Saskatoon for individuals with mental illness. They are committed to providing affordable housing options, as well as assistance in daily living skills for those in the community living with mental illness.

In 2007, the SHC purchased a site on Camponi Place from the City through a direct sale of land for the purpose of building affordable housing. In May 2013, City Council approved a 10 percent capital grant and five year tax abatement for Phase 1 of the project: a 20-unit rental building to be used as affordable supportive housing for adults living with severe and persistent mental illnesses. In early 2016, City Council approved another 10 percent capital grant and five year tax abatement for Phase 2 of this development: a second 20-unit supportive rental building. Construction is currently ongoing and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2016.



From left -
 Liane Dagenais, CMHC – Affordable Housing Consultant,
 Jennifer Campeau, MLA for Saskatoon Fairview,
 Don Atchison, Mayor of Saskatoon,
 Sandra Afseth, Chairperson of the Board of Directors at the Saskatoon Housing Coalition

Commercial Street Use Activity

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Whether it is a sunny afternoon or a warm evening in our Downtown, Saskatoon residents now have more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors than ever before. In recent years, attractive street use activities have visually enhanced the City's three major business districts, Downtown, Riversdale, and Broadway. Provisions for a variety of unique commercial activities promotes the City Centre as a vibrant cultural and entertainment district. As referenced in the *City of Saskatoon, City Centre Plan, 2013*, "the outdoor street environment is an asset that should be exploited to the maximum extent possible. These types of outdoor spaces attract many demographic groups and will elevate the City's profile in the region." It is one of the 12 Key Strategies framed within the *City Centre Plan, 2013*.

Sidewalk cafes and mobile vending carts have been popular in Saskatoon for a long time, but it was not until 2013, when on-street mobile food truck regulations were introduced, that street use activity dramatically increased. Food trucks provide a unique alternative dining choice to consumers on the go. In July 2013, the City of Saskatoon issued three licenses to on-street mobile food truck operators. In 2014, four on-street trucks were licensed, and in 2015, this number increased to 10. With this level of growth, we expect another strong year in 2016.

In support of the City Centre Plan, parking patios were approved by City Council in June 2014. An approved parking patio allows restaurant operators to rent parking stalls in front of their establishment and convert them into outdoor patios to serve to their patrons. A parking patio is essentially an expanded sidewalk cafe that extends beyond traditional boundaries while maintaining a safe and unobstructed walkway for pedestrians. Two parking patios were issued in 2015 to Drift Café in Riversdale and to Museo Coffee in Broadway. Other local restaurant businesses have expressed interest in designing their own parking patio for 2016.

The Seasonal Commercial Enterprise in Parks Policy was adopted by City Council on Jan. 26, 2015. This program allows entrepreneurs (excluding food services) to provide recreation, sport, and/or cultural enterprises to enhance tourism opportunities, and animate the riverbank. The application deadline is Feb. 15 of each calendar year. In the spring of 2015, Eco Glide Adventures was granted approval to operate out of Kiwanis Park North and provide Segway Eco-Tours along The Meewasin Trail.

For further information regarding sidewalk cafes, mobile vending carts, mobile food trucks, or parking patio applications, please visit our website at www.saskatoon.ca/businesslicense. Our website contains a variety of resources where you can view and print the application form, council policy, or information sheet.

www.saskatoon.ca



In November 2015, public engagement in the development of the Growth Plan to Half a Million wrapped up. Over the course of the project, we heard a wide range of discussions, concerns, and suggestions to help guide the future of our city. The Engagement Summary Reports that have been prepared during the project showcase the diversity of opinions and perspectives in our community, and are well worth a read.

Throughout the course of the project, a number of options were presented for the long-term directions of the core initiatives of Transit, Corridor Growth, and Core Area Bridges. The feedback and input from the public helped to guide us towards the preferred options. We also compared the results of the public engagement events to a representative online survey that was conducted by Insigtrix Research in June 2015.

In general, there was strong support for the main Growth Plan initiatives, which received over 80 percent support from participants in the open public engagement activities, and 90 percent support from the representative survey respondents.

The options for Corridor Growth were strongly supported by both the public event participants, and the representative survey respondents at 85 percent and 88 percent, respectively.

The Transit Plan with Bus Rapid Transit received support from 80 percent and 83 percent of public event and representative survey respondents, respectively.

The proposed long-term river crossing received the lowest support from public event participants, with just over 60 percent showing support for it, while 78 percent of the representative survey respondents indicated support for a new river crossing. For some respondents, it was specifically a concern with the location, connecting 33rd Street and Preston Avenue, while for others, a new river crossing was seen as counter to the active transportation and transit goals by providing more space for cars.

Suggested enhancements to the Growth Plan most commonly related to improvement of traffic design planning and congestion reduction. Other suggestions include repair and maintenance of existing infrastructure, and higher transit service levels, along with a focus on active transportation.

The concerns and suggestions that have been shared through the Growth Plan's development will also help to inform our ongoing work once implementation starts, where we'll look to the community again to help shape the more detailed plans that will come next.

On March 14, 2016, we hosted a Growth Plan Summit at City Hall, during a regularly scheduled Governance & Priorities Committee meeting. From 2 pm until 9:30 pm, the Committee received a substantial amount of information while Summit attendees occupied many seats in Council Chambers. The Administration presented reports on Transit, Corridor Growth, and Core Bridges in great detail. In addition, a special guest, Jarrett Walker, author of *Human Transit*, presented on the principles of transit planning. Time was allotted for public comment towards the end of the meeting and 20 people spoke to Committee. The Summit provided the public with a concluding opportunity to speak on the Growth Plan before it went to the Governance & Priorities Committee and Council in April.

The meeting was livestreamed on the City's website and archived for future viewing. If you wish to watch the archived video, head over to www.saskatoon.ca. The Growth Plan Technical Report and the Engagement Summary Reports are available at www.growingfwd.ca.

On April 25, 2016, the Growth Plan to Half a Million was approved in principle by City Council. Now on to implementation!

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Employment Areas Study

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As part of the Growth Plan to Half a Million (Growth Plan), the City of Saskatoon has recently completed the Employment Areas Study (Study). The Study pays particular attention to the characteristics of employment in our city today, what it may look like in the future, and how we ensure that existing and future employment areas contribute to making Saskatoon a healthier, more sustainable, attractive, and accessible place to live.

How we design and locate employment areas affects how people get to their jobs, how they move around within employment areas, and whether or not they are able to access the services and amenities they may want or need while at work.

Considering these factors is integral in:

- Supporting growth along major corridors,
- Coordinating investments in transit and roadway infrastructure,
- Managing demands for new river crossings, and
- Enhancing active transportation opportunities.

Employment Tomorrow

To ensure that enough employment lands are available to support employment growth at a population of 500,000, an employment projection was conducted. The projection is based on current and proposed growth plans and assumptions about job growth in existing built up areas of the City.

Highlights of the findings of the employment projection include:

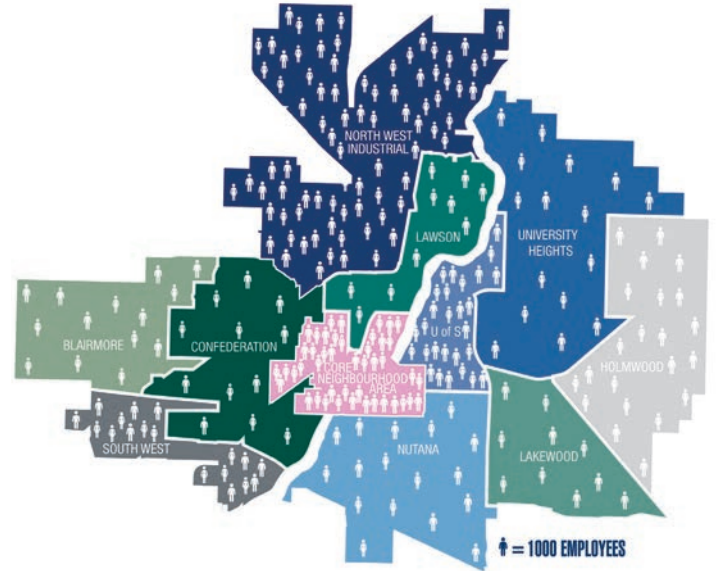
- There is generally sufficient land available within the proposed Growth Plan to support employment growth to 500,000 people.
- 56.6 percent of employment will be concentrated in the Core Neighbourhood, North West Industrial, and University of Saskatchewan areas.
- 10,800 jobs will be added to the Central Business District, a 50 percent increase from today.
- 44.4 percent of employment will be dispersed in smaller concentrations throughout Saskatoon.
- 62 percent of people will live east of the South Saskatchewan River, while 65 percent of jobs will be located west of the river.

Future Policy Directions

The Study recommends a number of future policy directions centered on achieving employment areas that are well designed, accessible to all transportation modes, and located closer to where people live, while retaining a strong City Centre that is the focal point of commerce in the City and region.

1) Employment Areas as Comprehensively Planned Units

The Official Community Plan has well-defined policies regarding the design and development of neighbourhoods, but not for employment areas. The absence of overarching policies to guide the detailed design and development of employment areas



makes it difficult to achieve a high quality of urban design that is supportive of a mixture of amenities and all transportation modes.

To achieve higher quality employment areas, the following policy development items are recommended:

- a) Create a new “Employment Areas Design and Development” Section in the OCP to guide the development of detailed area concept plans for employment areas.
- b) To align with current practice, refine OCP policies to clearly state that area concept plans should be required for non-residential development areas prior to being subdivided or developed.
- c) Explore areas where site plan control can be applied.
- d) Create “Employment Area Design Guidelines” that provide direction on building and site design for developers.

2) Future Industrial Land

The majority of existing and proposed industrial lands are concentrated in the City’s northwest, and will support employment growth to 500,000. As such, the current policy that encourages the majority of industrial development to concentrate in the City’s northwest should be reconsidered. Policies that guide the location of future industrial land should be general, and include consideration of matters such as:

- a) Balanced distribution of employment areas,
- b) Impacts to existing and planned infrastructure,
- c) Commuting patterns,
- d) Proximity to existing and future residents, and
- e) Results of environmental screenings.

3) City Centre Office Development

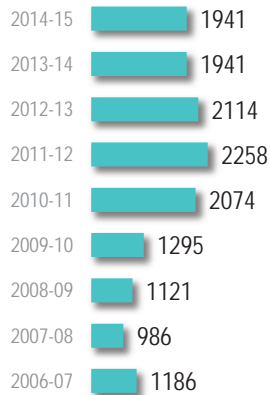
Retaining the City Centre as the heart of commerce in Saskatoon and the region is a key goal of the Study. Office development is a major employment generator in the City Centre. As such, trends and developments within the City Centre and throughout Saskatoon should be monitored to ensure that the core remains a prominent office employment area as the City grows.

A copy of the full report can be found at www.growingfwd.ca.

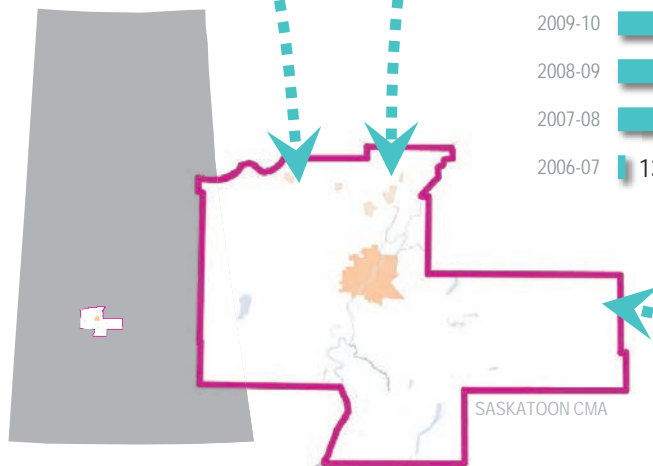
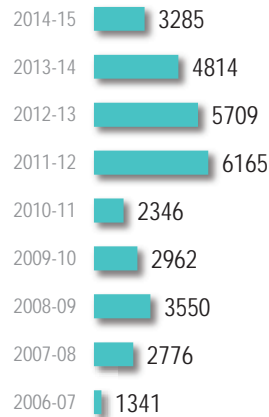
Saskatoon Census Metropolitan Area GROWTH

According to Statistics Canada the population was **304,975** as of July 2015.

Net Intraprovincial Migration 1,941

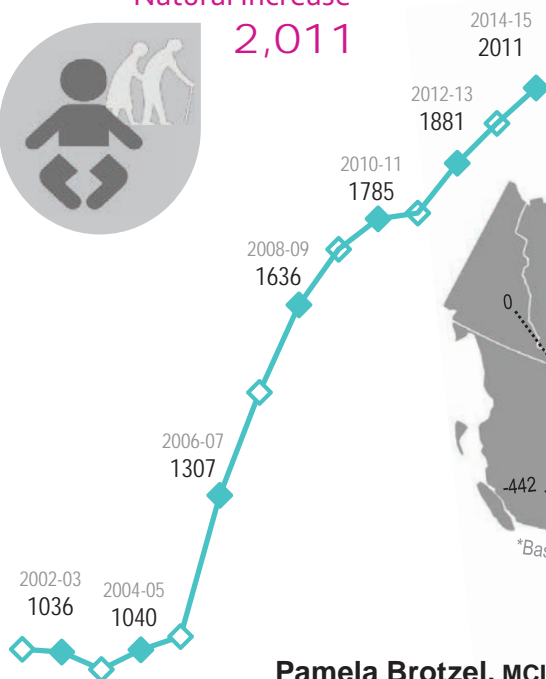


Net International Migration 3,285

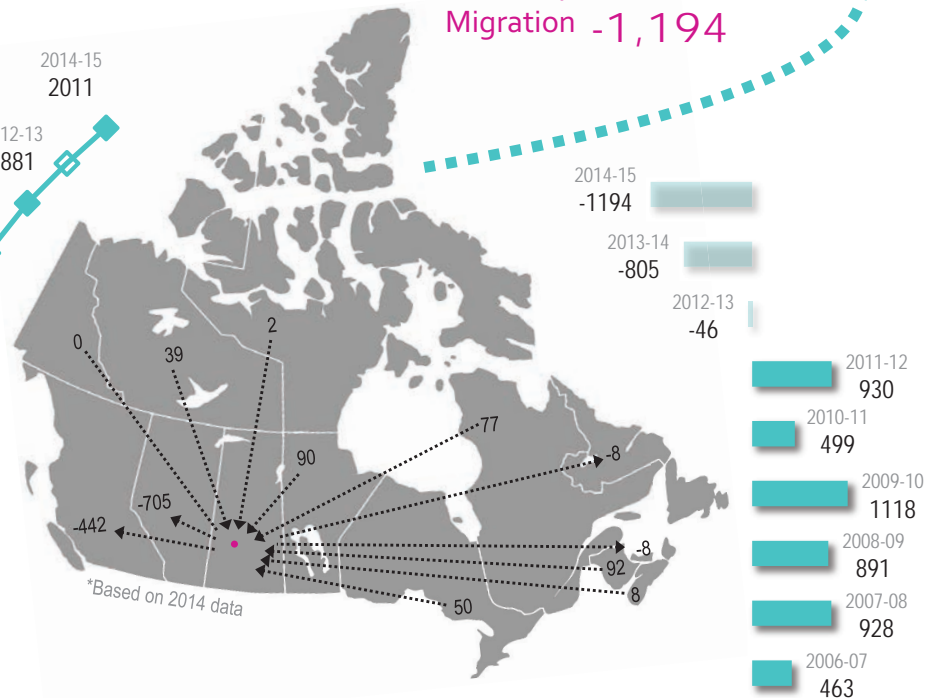


The total population has increased **16%** since 2010.

Natural Increase 2,011



Net Interprovincial Migration -1,194



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Publications on community trends are available on the City's website (look under 'Business & Development' – 'Planning Publications & Maps').

The current issue of *Planning + Design* is available for download at www.saskatoon.ca.

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