

# TRANSIT VILLAGES REPORT

- Plan For Growth
- Corridor Growth
- Transit Villages

December 2019



**DIALOG**



*This document was prepared by DIALOG for the City of Saskatoon as part of the Plan For Growth, Transit Villages Planning Process in collaboration with Colliers, WATT Consulting, a range of stakeholders and input from the community of Saskatoon.*



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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

As part of the Plan for Growth, the City of Saskatoon is redefining how and where it will grow, with a special focus on sustainable development. One of the City's key strategies is to encourage transit-oriented development around key stations of the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network. Referred to as Transit Villages, these development sites will not only help realize the goals of the Plan for Growth, but also offer a wider range of amenities, commercial services, and housing options in established and planned neighbourhoods, thereby enriching the quality of life in those areas, and creating unique, memorable neighbourhoods that all of Saskatoon can enjoy and take pride in.

This section describes the following:

- Transit Villages Project Overview
- Urban Transit Villages
- Greenfield Transit Villages
- Drivers for the Plan
- Project Process + Engagement

## 1.1 Transit Villages Overview

As part of the City of Saskatoon's Plan for Growth, the City is undertaking several projects that will help to provide focus and direction on the integration of land use and movement throughout the city. These projects include, among others: planning for growth and intensified land uses along the city's corridors; providing enhanced transit service through a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT); and, supporting the growth of 'Transit Villages' at selected sites along the BRT system route.

### What is a Transit Village?

Transit Villages are large commercial sites re-imagined into future hubs of activity where transit, home, work and entertainment intersect. They are envisioned to leverage investments in public transit, especially the BRT, to create enhanced community nodes and destinations that integrate a range of community-oriented activities, services, and land uses (i.e. commercial, employment, and residential). Transit Villages support the BRT by providing higher population density along its route. In addition, they support the city by creating high-quality and people-oriented urban environments, so that Saskatoon remains a competitive and attractive place to live in the future.

### 1.1.1 Transit Village Locations

There are five proposed Transit Village locations (see Figure 1) that include three urban sites currently developed as shopping centres and two greenfield sites which are currently undeveloped, but anticipated to develop at some point over the coming 25-year planning horizon. Once the initial phase of BRT construction is complete, the three urban Transit Villages will be connected. Once Holmwood and Blairmore are developed, it is anticipated that the BRT will be extended to provide service to them.

### Site Selection

These sites were selected for a number of reasons, in part for their location along the BRT corridor and potential to deliver a high-quality and vibrant hub for local neighbourhoods. To varying degrees, the three urban Transit Villages—Confederation, Centre Mall, and

University Heights—already fulfill that role of being local hubs, although they are designed as a typical malls that customers drive to. They don't cultivate a vibrant or active public realm, or present an inviting face to the surrounding community, being designed instead as inward facing and auto-oriented destinations.

The auto-oriented mall, anchoring a sprawling suburb of single-family homes, was once the norm for commercial development but this paradigm is shifting. The City is facilitating such a shift through its Plan for Growth, which encourages the creation of higher density, more complete communities. Many other malls across Canada and the United States are re-inventing themselves as more than places to shop, becoming destinations that provide a richer and more complete experience for visitors (see section 1.3.3, for more detail).

### 1.1.2 Applying and Interpreting this Plan

This Conceptual Planning Framework (the Plan, here on) has been developed such that it can be applied to the urban and greenfield Transit Village locations, and is tailored to the unique conditions of each. For urban sites it encourages and manages their evolution from single-use auto-oriented commercial centres, to vibrant, mixed-use communities. For greenfield sites it guides their development in keeping with the Plan's Vision and Principles.

For the urban sites, an additional layer of detail, including plan framework diagrams, are provided in order to facilitate, guide, and promote their redevelopment. Because the greenfield sites are the subject of independent planning exercises by one landowner, plan framework diagrams are not provided for these sites, as it is considered unnecessary to compete or contradict those owner's plans, aspects of which are already at an advanced stage. However, the Vision, Principles, and guidelines of this Plan should all be applied to greenfield sites as their respective master plans are developed and refined.

### Interpreting this Plan

The Plan is intended to serve as a vision and high-level guide for decision-making for development proponents, City staff, City Council, and the community, to realize the Vision for the Transit Villages. It should not be treated as a "development-ready" plan, but rather as a demonstration of vision and principles to form the basis for future, more detailed planning. It should be read in its entirety to understand the context of its recommendations.



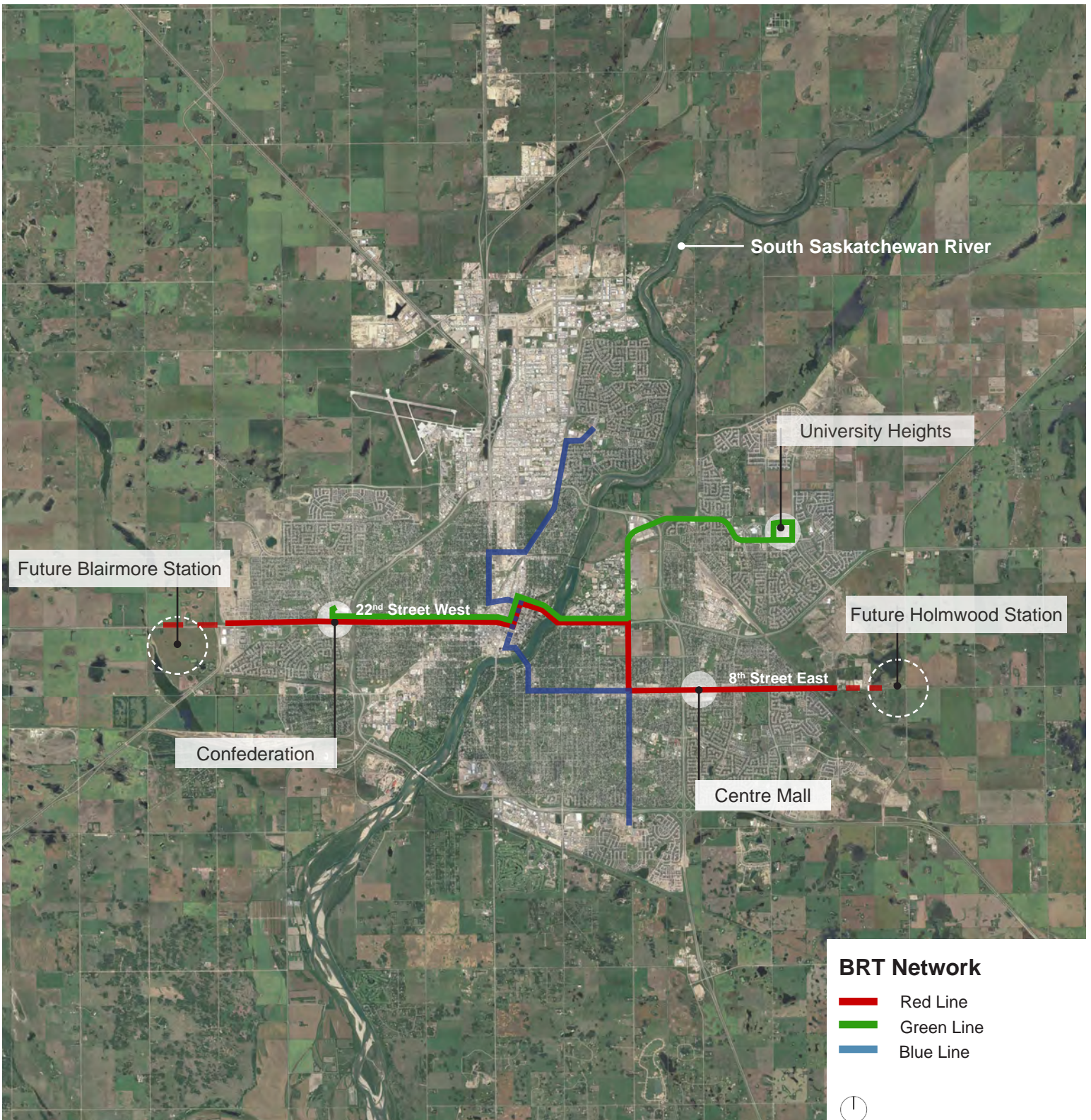


Fig.1 Aerial View of Saskatoon with Transit Village sites and city context



## 1.2 Urban Transit Villages

Urban Transit Villages are existing single-use commercial centres that have been constructed over the past 10 to 50 years. As the City makes investment in BRT and updates the planning policy that applies to these sites, it is anticipated that they will be prime candidates for infill, intensification, and diversification of land use following principles of transit-oriented development.

**CONFEDERATION** Transit Village is located west of Downtown, along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West and Confederation Drive. The site includes an enclosed shopping mall (“Confederation Mall”) as well as several commercial buildings dispersed across the site. These vary from large, single occupant buildings such as the one occupied by the Real Canadian Superstore, and multi-tenant buildings occupied by several retailers. Major destinations in proximity to the Transit Village are the Shaw Centre, Atlantic Park, Cosmo Civic Centre and Pacific Park. Surrounding neighbourhoods include Fairhaven, Parkridge, Pacific Heights, Confederation Park, Massey Place, Hampton Village, and Westview.

**CENTRE MALL** Transit Village is located along 8<sup>th</sup> Street East and Acadia Drive, an important arterial road within Saskatoon and commercial strip. The site is characterized by a large enclosed mall that occupies the majority of the site. There are several smaller commercial buildings on the north edge of the site along 8<sup>th</sup> Street East, the remainder of the site is surface parking. Surrounding neighbourhoods include College Park East, College Park, Greystone Heights, Brevoort Park, and Lakeview.

**UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS** Transit Village is located in the north-east area of Saskatoon along Attridge Drive and McOrmond Drive. The site is occupied by numerous small-scale commercial buildings. Major destinations in the area include: Sasktel Sports Centre, Alice Turner Branch Library, Centennial Collegiate, Forest Park, Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo. Surrounding neighbourhoods include Sutherland, Forest Grove, Erindale, Abor Creek, Willowgrove, Silverspring, Evergreen, and parts of Aspen Ridge neighbourhoods.



Fig.2 Aerial view of Confederation Transit Village with potential BRT stations



Fig.3 Aerial view of Centre Mall Transit Village with possible future BRT station



Fig.4 Aerial view of University Heights Transit Village with possible future BRT stations



## 1.3 Greenfield Transit Villages

Greenfield Transit Villages are unique from the urban sites in that they are undeveloped, and are both master planned communities with one landowner. Therefore, they present a tremendous opportunity to align the planning and design of these communities with the Transit Villages Vision and Principles, from the outset. Both Holmwood and Blairmore will be developed along their own unique time lines, driven partly by market demand. It is anticipated that as each development is reviewed by City staff and refined by their respective developers, the Transit Village's Vision and Principles will be applied to these future Transit Villages.

**Holmwood** Transit Village is a master planned community being developed by Dream Developments on the eastern edge of Saskatoon. It is located along 8th Street East, to the east of the Brighton neighbourhood.

**Blairmore** Transit Village is a master planned community located in the north west area of Saskatoon. The site is owned by Saskatoon Land who is leading its development. The neighbourhood is south east of Saskatchewan Highway 7 and 22nd Street West intersection.

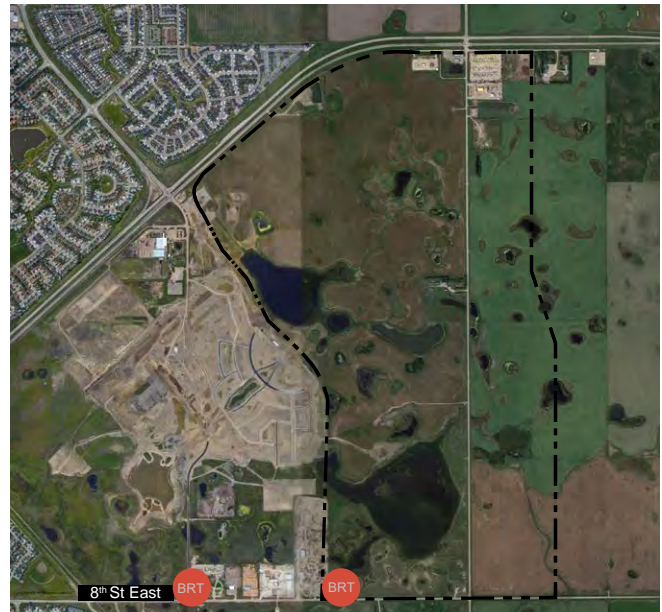


Fig.5 Aerial view of Holmwood Transit Village with possible future BRT stations

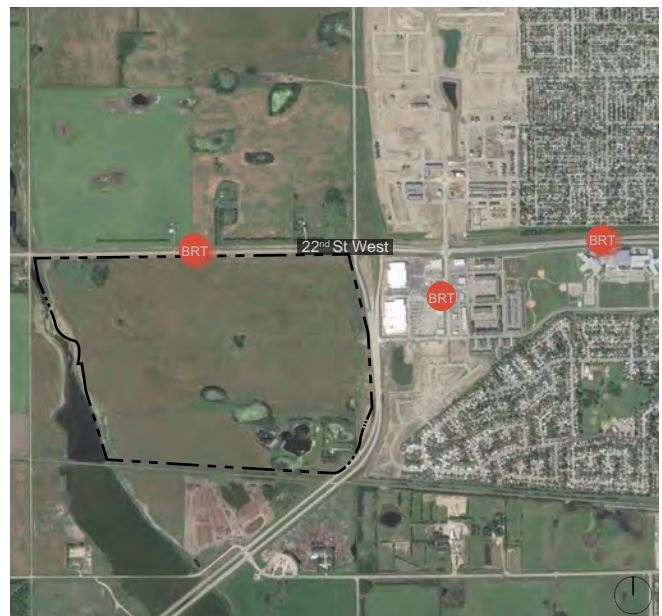


Fig.6 Aerial view of Blairmore Transit Village with possible future BRT stations

## 1.4 Drivers for the Plan

### 1.4.1 The Plan for Growth

The City of Saskatoon’s Plan for Growth takes steps to accommodate an additional 250,000 people in the decades to come. Adopted in 2016, it aims to create a foundation for more sustainable social, environmental, economic growth that enhances the quality of life for all residents. The Plan for Growth is structured as an over-arching policy document that informs and guides a number of projects, including infrastructure projects like the BRT system and policy projects like Transit Villages. Following are its key components:

- **Corridor Growth** – encouraging growth and redevelopment near existing major corridors (e.g. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West) and at major development nodes.
- **Strategic Infill** – supporting development of the Downtown, North Downtown, and University of Saskatchewan endowment lands to accommodate more people and jobs within the existing city footprint.

- **Core Area Bridges** – making the best use the existing road capacity and planning for how people will move around in the future.
- **Employment Areas** – providing opportunities for employment in strategic areas throughout Saskatoon.
- **Active Transportation Plan** – providing the necessary infrastructure to encourage day-to-day walking and cycling for commuting and recreation.
- **Financing Growth** – maintaining a fulsome understanding of the finances of growth in terms of infrastructure, services, and tax revenue.
- **Transit and BRT** – investing in the public transit system so that it is a convenient and attractive option to get around.

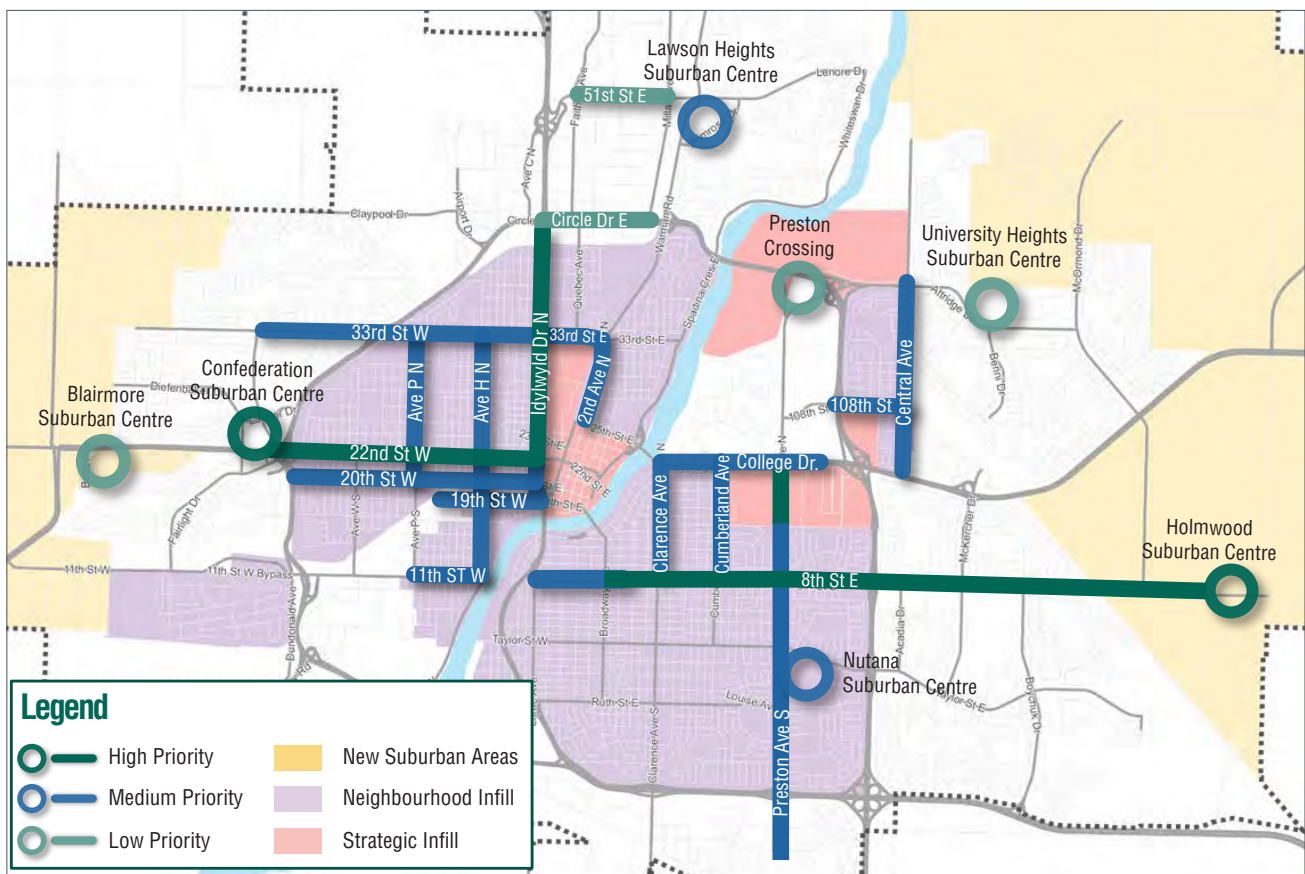


Fig.7. Excerpt of City of Saskatoon Growth Plan, indicating corridors and areas with high infill redevelopment potential



### 1.4.2 Bus Rapid Transit

As part of the Plan for Growth, the City of Saskatoon is planning a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. The BRT will not only make it easier for people to get around, making transit a more convenient mode of travel, the public investment is an incentive for redevelopment along major corridors and at the urban Transit Villages. For example, being within walking distance to the BRT is a great amenity, giving users convenient and low-cost access to a much wider area of the city, without the cost of maintaining a car or having to worry about finding parking. Some properties nearby the BRT, including the Transit Villages, present a significant redevelopment opportunity because of their access to this service.

The proposed BRT corridor is within walking distance of 52,000 residents. Aside from enabling and encouraging infill and redevelopment in the city, the BRT will also reduce the number of cars on the road by encouraging a shift in travel modes—one bus with 30 passengers is

equivalent to 27 cars along the same route! This helps to manage greenhouse gases and carbon emissions by reducing the driving rate per capita in the city.

At final build out, the new BRT system will consist of the Blue Line, which facilitates north-south connections and access to the city's industrial areas, and the Red and Green Lines, which facilitate east-west connections and access to residential neighbourhoods, commercial areas, the University of Saskatchewan and Downtown (see Figure 8). The new BRT system will be supported by a network of bus routes facilitating local access to neighbourhoods and business parks. Because there will be high-frequency service along dedicated BRT lines, and a simplified network of local bus routes, it is expected that the overall efficiency of the system will improve with more frequent service along dedicated BRT lines, and a anticipated the BRT will operate every 10 minutes during peak hours compared to the current typical 30-minute bus frequency.

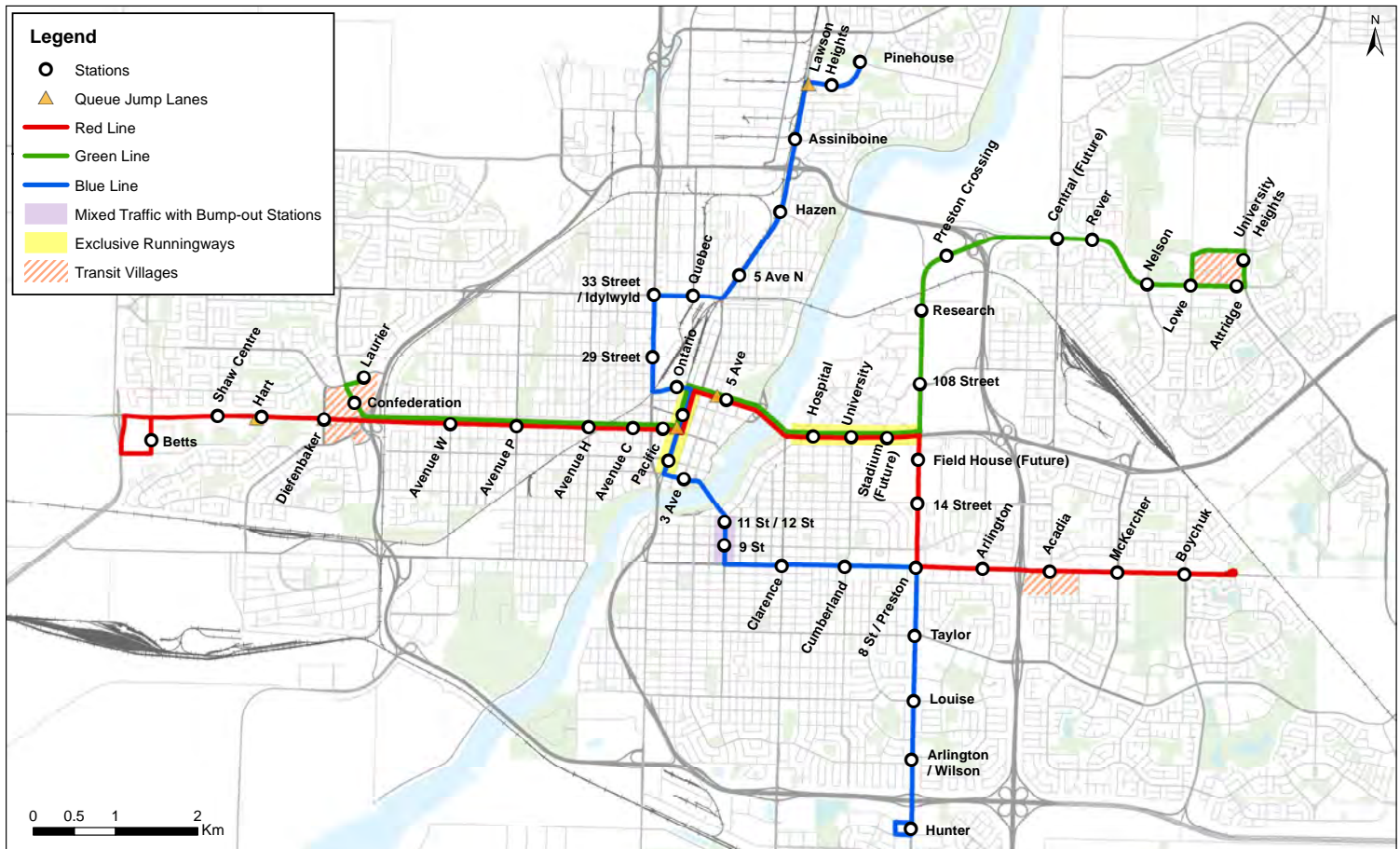


Fig.8 City of Saskatoon BRT Routing (approved March 2019, subject to change)

### 1.4.3 Malls are Changing

The Canadian retail landscape is changing rapidly, influenced by several factors, key among them the rise of on-line shopping and consumer preferences shifting away from static shopping malls to more experience-based commercial places.\* From a market perspective, a stable economy in Canada is fueling domestic consumption and sustaining demand for commercial property.

Public transit is playing a catalytic role in this transformation. Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and other investors are beginning to acquire properties at prime locations along transit corridors, hubs, and major stations, anticipating the marketability and convenience that this service provides for customers, residents, business owners, and employees. This is a marked departure from previous valuation of commercial sites, which emphasized access to arterial roads, highways, and a high volume of parking supply. The conventional model of an enclosed mall at the centre of a property surrounded by surface parking is changing. In cities across Canada, mall owners are unlocking the value of their properties by introducing a wider range of uses in a compact and walkable development pattern. In a few leading edge developments (Edmonton’s Bonnie Doon Mall, Calgary’s Northland Mall, Richmond’s Lansdowne Mall, and Toronto’s Bayview Village) the “mall” is being redefined as a dynamic, active, and lively environment characterized by an interesting mix of uses and a high-quality public realm.

Another important catalyst in the transformation of the mall is the rise in e-commerce and on-line purchasing that is challenging the traditional brick and mortar retail format. By introducing a wider range of uses, including residential, restaurants, food stores, and professional offices, mall owners have re-invigorated their holdings and broadened their customer base. By investing in the public realm, and creating high-quality, memorable spaces, mall owners are creating another reason to visit and linger.

\* This section is based on annual reports from the Urban Land Institute, Price Waterhouse Coopers, and CBRE on emerging trends in the commercial real estate market.



Lansdowne Centre Mall, Richmond, British Columbia



Bayview Village Mall, Toronto, Ontario



Northland Mall Redevelopment, Calgary, Alberta



## 1.5 Project Process + Engagement

The Plan was developed through a transparent and collaborative process that integrated the perspectives of multiple stakeholders and Saskatoon residents. The project followed a four-phase process unfolding from September 2017 to approximately June 2018. All elements of the Plan, including the Vision, Principles, concept plans, design directions and plan frameworks, were developed in an iterative process with input from stakeholders and the public.

Several engagement events were held over the course of the four phase project, provided a collaborative venue in which to develop the Plan and advance its key components. In addition to engaging Saskatoon residents, considerable effort was made to engage landowners at the Transit Villages and, more generally, members of the development community. The input of all individuals has been invaluable in preparing this Plan.

### 1.5.1 Phase 1: Background Reconnaissance

**Project Team Meetings (Oct. 2017)** - This initial round of meetings initiated the project, with a particular focus on establishing project objectives, and reviewing key opportunities and constraints for each Transit Village site. Members of the BRT planning team, as well as other concurrent City-led planning processes, were also included in these discussions in order to align the City's multiple planning projects.

**Site Tour (Oct. 2017)** - The project team visited each of the sites in order to investigate their physical condition, and the character of surrounding neighbourhoods. This provided an understanding of physical opportunities and constraints, building off earlier discussions.

### 1.5.2 Phase 2: Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

**Stakeholder Interviews + Workshop (Nov. 2017)**- Early in the process, the project team engaged key stakeholders, in particular landowners, tenants, and property managers to gather their input on potential mixed-use redevelopment opportunities at the Transit Village sites, and what they thought the Vision for these areas should include.



*Stakeholder Interviews and Workshop (November)*

### 1.5.3 Phase 3: Concept Development

**Concept Development Workshop (Jan. 2018)** - This event brought together multiple stakeholders to develop conceptual plans for the Transit Village sites, focusing on the three urban locations. The workshop began with a discussion about the desired vision for each of the Transit Village locations, and what opportunities and objectives they needed to respond to. Based on this discussion, participants also collaborated on preliminary concept diagrams that responded to the key ideas discussed during the visioning session.

**Pop-up Open House (Jan. 2018)** - In January the project team organized a pop-up engagement event at Confederation Mall in order to gather input from members of the public, including mall tenants, transit users, and residents in the area. The pop-up open house showcased the opportunities and constraints analysis and key design directions developed in the previous phase. Outcomes from the Concept Development Workshop, including a draft Vision and Principles, and some preliminary concept diagrams were also shared.



*Concept Development Workshop, January 2018*

### 1.5.4 Phase 4: Transit Villages Report

**Public Open House (Mar. 2018)** - This significant engagement event included multiple ongoing projects related to the City's Plan for Growth: BRT system planning, Corridor Growth, and Transit Villages, among others. The project team shared information on the emerging conceptual planning framework for the Transit Villages, including: the Vision, Planning Principles, concept plans, and plan frameworks, and also demonstration plans that illustrate the potential build-out of each site.

**Pop-up Open House (Mar. 2018)** - This event held at the Centre Mall was an opportunity for the project team to engage the public on the work completed to date, while also reaching broad group of people who may not have come out to the Public Open House. This event focused on informing people of the project process, and sharing some of the key elements of the Transit Villages planning framework, including the Vision, Planning Principles, and concept plans.

#### **Public Open House "Come and Grow" (Jan. 2019)**

- This event was held to update the community on progress made in implementing the Growth Plan. Information was shared from multiple projects, including: Corridor Planning, Transit Villages, University of Saskatchewan endowment lands, and streetscape improvements.

#### **Landowner Meetings (Mar. 2019 Apr.2019) -**

Throughout March and April, individual meetings were held with landowners. The objective was to update anyone who was unaware of the Plan on its content and direction and to gather feedback on how it can be aligned with their long-term objectives.

## 1.5.5 Summary of Key Themes

Throughout the project process there were multiple opportunities for engagement and discourse between the project team, stakeholders, and Saskatoon residents. Over the course of these events, several important themes were discussed. These ideas informed and guided the project team's work in preparing the Plan.

### A Bold Vision and Identity:

- The community should be involved in shaping the Transit Village Plans.
- Transit Villages need to be bold and unique places within the city, and very walkable!
- This is about the whole city! It could be a huge win, or missed opportunity.

### Sustainability and Resilience:

- Integrate a range of travel modes, including bicycles, as well as walking, transit and vehicles.
- Transit Villages should be more sustainable, compact, and walkable.
- Integrate sustainable technologies in the Transit Villages.

### Mixed Uses and Development Character:

- Support a range of land uses, people are interested in more diverse amenities, services, and employment opportunities.
- Let's build up! We need to move away from low-density developments, especially in urban locations.
- Provide sufficient density to encourage redevelopment, while creating a welcoming and beautiful place.

### Public Realm and BRT:

- The BRT, local buses, and the public realm should all offer a smooth, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for users.
- Provide more cycling infrastructure and connections.
- Transit Villages should define a unique sense of place that contributes to and enhances people's experience of the BRT.

### Manage Parking Supply:

- Manage parking supply and demand more effectively, including through pay parking.
- Current zoning requires an excessive amount of parking spaces and limits redevelopment
- Consolidate surface parking to parking structures or underground.

### Urban Integration:

- Phase growth so that the Transit Village feels complete over the short and medium term, and not like a construction site.
- Respect the Character of surrounding communities, and complement them.
- Integrate with surrounding areas through an interconnected and multi-modal movement network.



March Open House at Western Development Museum





# 2

## OPPORTUNITIES + CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Each Transit Village presents a unique set of opportunities and constraints in terms of their development potential. These are affected by a range of factors, including: physical context and location; existing developments on site; existing grading and topography; and, configuration of the surrounding street network, among other factors, including market considerations. These factors affect the urban and greenfield transit villages differently. For example, while the greenfield sites do not have an existing street grid to design around, they also do not have the benefit of an established customer base nearby to support new commercial ventures. In general, the opportunities and constraints affecting the urban Transit Village sites are more complex than for the greenfield sites and are the focus of this section.

As an overview, this section describes the following:

- Policy Framework
- Urban Context Analysis
- Site Development Constraints
- Concept Opportunities

## 2.1 Policy Framework

### 2.1.1 Planning and Development Act

The Province of Saskatchewan's Planning and Development Act, 2007 (PDA), governs land use planning and development in the province. The over-arching purpose of the PDA is to provide a community planning framework that promotes economic growth, environmental sustainability, social and cultural development, and sustainable communities. It does so by creating a framework for the province to issue policy directives to municipalities and regional governments, and by providing municipalities with effective tools for community planning. The Province issues policy directives through the Statements of Provincial Interest (2012), which describe high-level policy direction on important land use matters. The Transit Villages directly respond to several areas of Provincial interest, including:

- Public Works - providing cost effective use of public works to facilitate growth and economic development.
- Residential Development - providing citizens access to a range of housing options, including enhancing economic and social well-being of communities.
- Transportation - providing safe and cost-effective transportation systems that support community development, economic growth, and diversification.

Alignment with Provincial policy objectives is a core component of the Transit Village's Vision.

The PDA establishes that a 'Concept Plan' must include a land use plan, proposed development densities, and a servicing plan, among other items. It is important to note that the sense in which "concept plan" is used in this Plan, and through this process, is distinct from the "Concept Plans" defined in the PDA. In order for a Concept Plan to be enacted it must be adopted by a municipality under the provisions of the PDA, which is not the intention for this Plan. Instead, this document outlines a Conceptual Planning Framework that will enable the City to prepare the necessary policy and bylaws to manage growth and change at the Transit Village sites.

### 2.1.2 City of Saskatoon Official Community Plan

Saskatoon's Official Community Plan (OCP) is the key land use planning document in the city, providing direction for land use planning and development in the city. The OCP's vision is for a sustainable quality of life that meets today's needs without compromising economic, environmental and social needs in the future.

Within the OCP, designations are described under general land uses and development character. This policy direction is complemented by the Zoning Bylaw, which includes more details and policy directions to shape development. The greenfield Transit Villages are designated as 'Urban Holding Areas' in anticipation of future development. The urban Transit Villages are designated as commercial areas under the following designations:

- **Confederation** is designated as Suburban Centre Commercial (east of Confederation Drive), and Arterial Commercial (remainder of the site).
- **Centre Mall** is designated as Arterial Commercial.
- **University Heights** is designated as Suburban Centre Commercial.

Those land use designations are described as follows:

- **Suburban Centre Commercial** areas provide for a range of shopping centre services and associated commercial activities.
- **Arterial Commercial** areas include business uses that are normally located along highways and major roadways.

### 2.1.3 City of Saskatoon Plan for Growth

The Plan for Growth provides a vision and strategic goals to pro-actively manage the changes associated with the city's growth and development. The plan is structured under several key strategies for managing growth and change.

The Plan recognizes public transit as a key factor in influencing how the city grows. To facilitate residential intensification it is important to provide multiple options for movement, including a convenient, accessible, and efficient transit system that provides an attractive customer experience.

The Plan for Growth identifies the Corridor Growth program as an important initiative by which the City of Saskatoon can encourage intensification and infill development. The Transit Villages are a component of the Corridor Growth program. The Corridor Growth program is looking at what kinds of policies and bylaws can be enacted to facilitate context sensitive redevelopment along the city's major corridors, in particular those streets served by the BRT. Similarly, the Transit Villages project, and this Plan, outline a Conceptual Planning Framework that will guide the City in developing a policy framework to manage growth and change at the Transit Village sites.

### 2.1.4 City of Saskatoon Active Transportation Plan

The Saskatoon Active Transportation Plan is a transportation study with an objective to increase transportation choices within the City as well as establish a long-term vision for active transportation in line with the City's Growth Plan. It notes that by 2045, the goal is double walking and cycling trips to 24% of all daily trips and 15% of all commute trips.

The study highlights the current conditions of active transportation opportunities at the Transit Villages, in relation to the broader network. In particular, it emphasizes that there is significant potential to increase usage of walking and cycling at these sites. Various factors influenced this analysis such as proximity to multi-use trails and the permeability of topography.

Leading from the analysis, the Active Transportation Plan identified strategies and initiatives to further develop increased active transit network in the City.

This Plan carries forward recommendations of the Active Transportation Master Plan, aligning with the Plan's recommended expansion of the Active Transportation network. The street sections and hierarchy of this Plan reflect the recommended alignment of multi-use trails and cycling infrastructure, and in some instances, recommend additional connections, based on the more detailed planning undertaken for the urban Transit Villages.

### 2.1.5 City of Saskatoon Complete Streets Design and Policy Guide

The Saskatoon Complete Street Design and Policy Guide was created as one of the many strategies to recalibrate how the City of Saskatoon is planned and designed. Recognizing the effects of traditional urban roadway designs, the objective of the guide to shape the City's street design standards so that all modes of transportation can be supported and to encourage densification of major roads within the public right-of-way.

The guide provides necessary treatments to address street functions by intentionally connecting landuse and roadway planning. As areas of growth, the Transit Villages incorporated many of the principles and tools in the Complete Street Design and Policy Guide. All transportation recommendations and sections in this document were reviewed to conform with the guidelines.

## 2.2 Urban Context Analysis

This section provides a summary of each Transit Village's location within the city and its surrounding urban context.

**Confederation** Transit Village is a commercial hub that includes a number of commercial businesses, including a mall. It is surrounded by predominantly low-density residential uses, with some higher density residential uses along its edge. There are a number of schools, associated playing fields, a few neighbourhood parks, community recreational facilities and strip malls further east along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West. The site is auto-oriented and is a challenge to walk across.

**Centre Mall** Transit Village is a local shopping centre along 8th Street East. The site is surrounded with predominantly low-density residential although there is some medium-density residential to the east. The character of streets around the site are generally auto-oriented, with the exception of a few local streets. There is poor connectivity in the area, making for circuitous walking routes. The Centre Mall, straddling Acadia Drive, currently occupies the site and serves as a regionally important commercial center and amenity for local neighbourhoods as well as the city at large.

**University Heights** Transit Village is one of the few commercial hubs in the area, serving a relatively large suburban community. It is surrounded by a mix of land uses including some medium-density residential uses, community facilities, and open spaces, although there is a predominance of low-density residential development in the area. While there is a considerable amount of open space in the area, most of it is dedicated to sports fields, with some walking trails meandering through neighbourhoods. The site contains a number of low-rise commercial buildings that are surrounded by surface parking.

**Holmwood** Transit Village is located on the far eastern edge of Saskatoon's developed area. It is adjacent to the Brighton neighbourhood, another greenfield development, that is currently being developed. It is not far from the Centre Mall Transit Village, which is approximately a 5 minute drive away along 8th Street.

**Blairmore** Transit Village is located on the far western edge of Saskatoon's developed area. It is nearby the Shaw Centre, and two schools. There is also a big box commercial development on the east side of Highway 7, which includes a Walmart, a Lowes, and several other small to medium-sized commercial stores.

## 2.3 Site Constraints + Opportunities

### 2.3.1 Confederation

#### Constraints

- There are considerable grade differences on site, with almost a full storey (approx 4m) difference between the intersection of Confederation Drive and Laurier Drive, and Confederation Drive and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West is an inhospitable environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and effectively a barrier to north-south movement, unless traveling by car.
- The site is already developed with several commercial buildings.
- The ownership structure is fragmented, with the site being composed of numerous smaller property parcels owned by separate entities. In general the property lines are not orthogonal and do not follow a typical urban grid.
- Surrounding open spaces are primarily geared toward recreation uses, there is a lack of socially-oriented gathering spaces.
- Confederation Drive and Laurier Drive are prone to flooding during heavy rainfall.
- Circle Drive Interchange ramps and freeway connection are barriers to walkability.
- Several adjoining roads carry significant vehicle volumes and have existing points of access control.

#### Opportunities

- Continue to provide a commercial destination for the surrounding community, while diversifying the range of amenities and services available.
- Provide a diversity of open spaces that meet a greater range of community needs.
- Provide for more pedestrian and cyclist crossings along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West, and design intersections to be safer and more welcoming for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Introduce a pedestrian circulation network, so that people can safely and comfortably walk to destinations across the site.



CONFEDERATION



Fig.8 Context Analysis, Aerial view of Confederation

CENTRE MALL



Fig.9 Context Analysis, Aerial view of Centre Mall

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



Fig.10 Context Analysis, Aerial view of University Heights



- Provide a mix of land uses on the site that cater to local and residential needs, encouraging a greater range of commercial amenities, services, and retailers.
- Allow for higher density residential and mixed-use development, and establish a critical mass of people in the Transit Village.
- Take advantage of the extremely wide right-of-way on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West to create an enhanced linear park space with walking and cycling trails.
- Integrate the existing underpass (under Circle Drive) into the site and plan for an additional crossing over 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West to facilitate active transportation and pedestrian connectivity.

### 2.3.2 Centre Mall

#### Constraints

- Acadia Drive has an artificially elevated grade over a below-grade pedestrian tunnel between the east and west portions of the mall.
- There are gas stations on the northern edge of the site, which may present obstacles to redevelopment if there is soil contamination surrounding them and clean up required as a result.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Street East is designed as an auto-oriented commercial strip, catering primarily to customers who will drive there. Though this will change with the BRT, evolving the existing commercial fabric and character of 8<sup>th</sup> Street East will be an ongoing process.

#### Opportunities

- The majority of the site is owned by one entity, which should expedite the redevelopment of the site since it will not require prolonged negotiations and land assembly between multiple owners.
- Complement the commercial character of 8<sup>th</sup> Street East with unique retail and commercial uses, local neighbourhood-oriented convenience retail, and experience-based retail environments.
- Re-define the character of 8<sup>th</sup> Street East to make it a more pedestrian-oriented environment.
- Develop higher density residential uses at the site, to take advantage of proximity to the BRT and provide a

greater diversity of housing typologies within this area of the city.

- Create stronger physical connections to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Create a community hub and destination with a central public open space, potentially leveraging the existing mall structures, that can be a draw and gathering point for the surrounding community.
- Improve connectivity and options for multi-modal movement across the site by providing new street connections, sidewalks, and paths.

### 2.3.3 University Heights

#### Constraints

- Residential development south of Attridge Drive is built out with a graded landscape buffer forming a barrier for south connections into the community.
- Surrounding streets are not conducive to pedestrian or cyclist movement.
- Poor connectivity to surrounding areas if moving by bicycle or walking and would require considerable traffic calming and improvement.
- To the north are federally-owned agricultural lands that are unlikely to redevelop in the near term. To an extent this limits the ability to cluster a larger population base around the site.
- The ownership structure on the site is fragmented, with it being composed of numerous property parcels owned by separate entities.

#### Opportunities

- Property boundaries are generally orthogonal and align with existing streets. There is an opportunity to extend a finer grain street grid within the site, following these property lines, and minimizing the need for lot consolidation.
- Take advantage of proximity to the SaskTel Sports Centre to create a distinct local destination by providing complementary uses to it, and a more favourable experience-based retail destination.

- Re-define the character of surrounding streets, in particular Attridge Drive and McOrmond Drive, to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment that's also conducive to cycling. Carry this design philosophy into and throughout the Transit Village.
- Plan for a diverse mix of land uses and a high-quality public realm that will create a destination and community hub that provides a unique and memorable experience for visitors and residents in the Transit Village.
- Take advantage of excellent access to the BRT (via 3 stops) by integrating these destinations with the Transit Village through the public realm, and locating complementary adjacent uses.
- Allocate greater development density to create a critical mass of people. Transition building heights down to surrounding open spaces and neighbourhoods.
- Provide an improved public realm that facilitates community gathering and active, frequent, use of outdoor spaces.
- Create stronger connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, in particular with new streets and paths wherever possible. Provide for improved pedestrian movement and connections across the site in the long-term, especially for pedestrians. The street grid could be extended northward should the federally owned agricultural lands ever redevelop.

TRANSIT VILLAGES OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

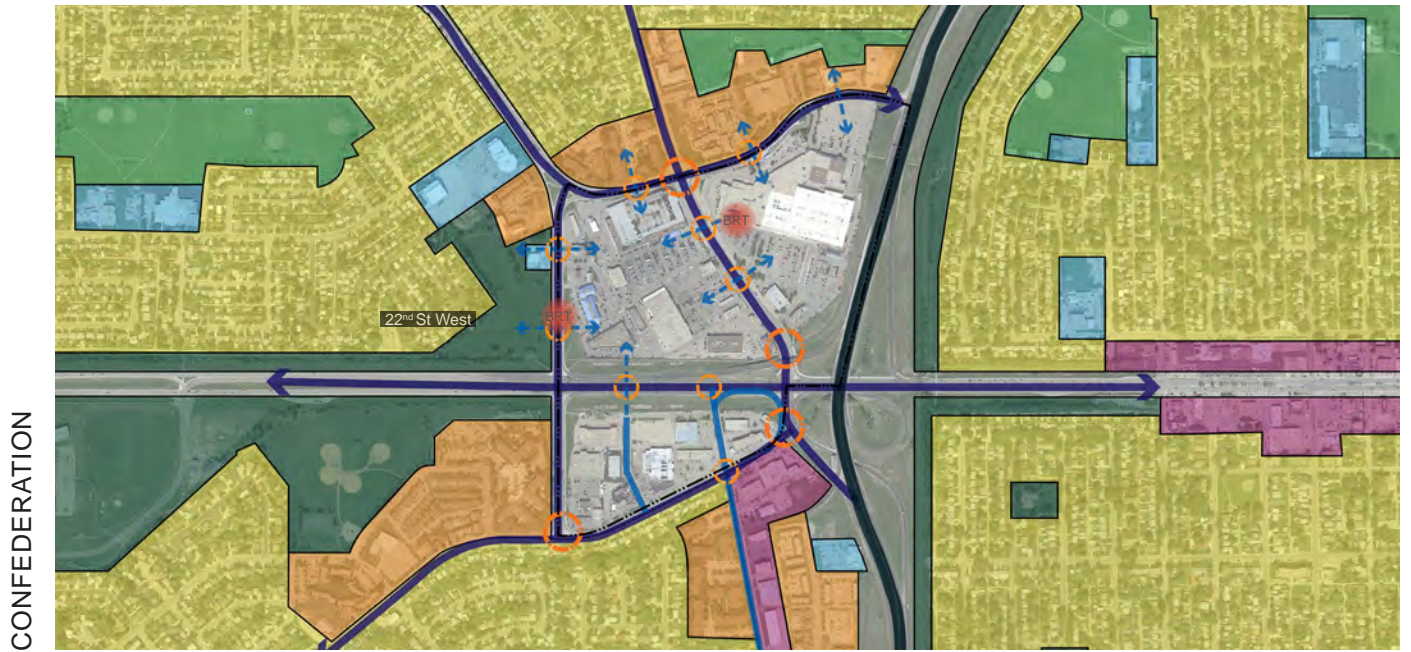


Fig.11 Confederation Opportunities Diagram

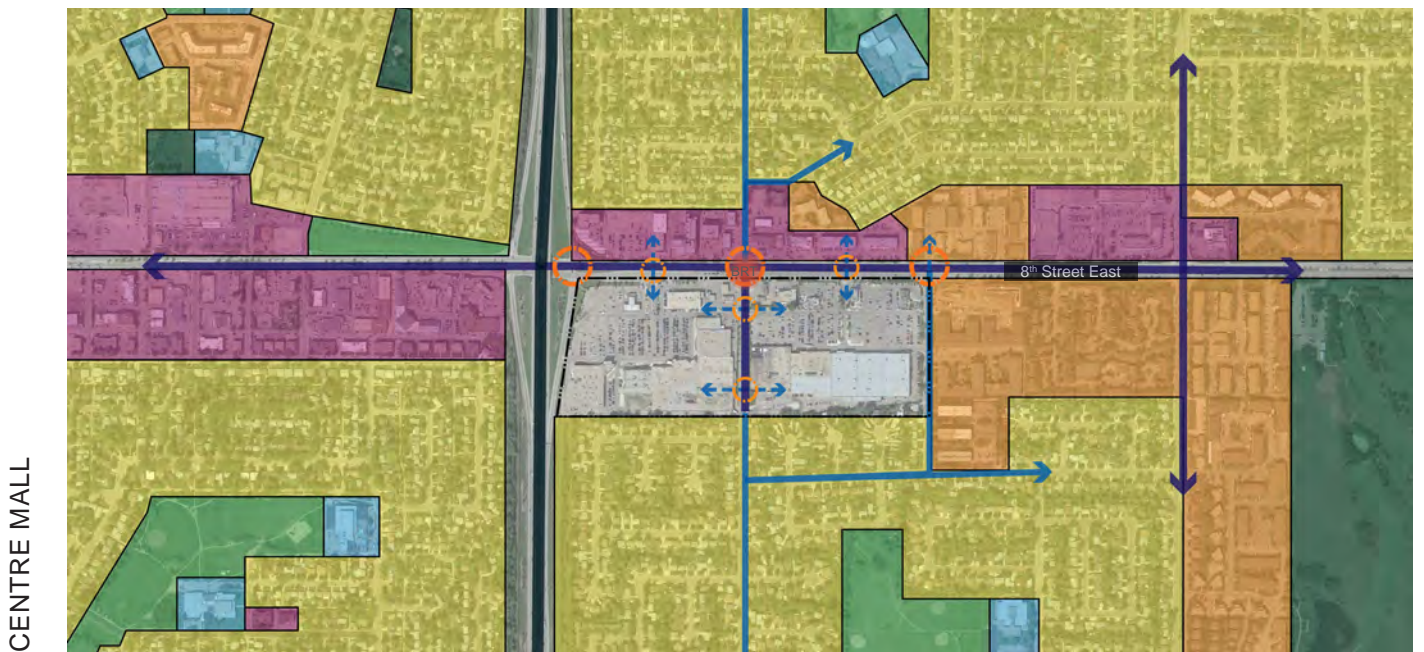


Fig.12 Centre Mall Opportunities Diagram





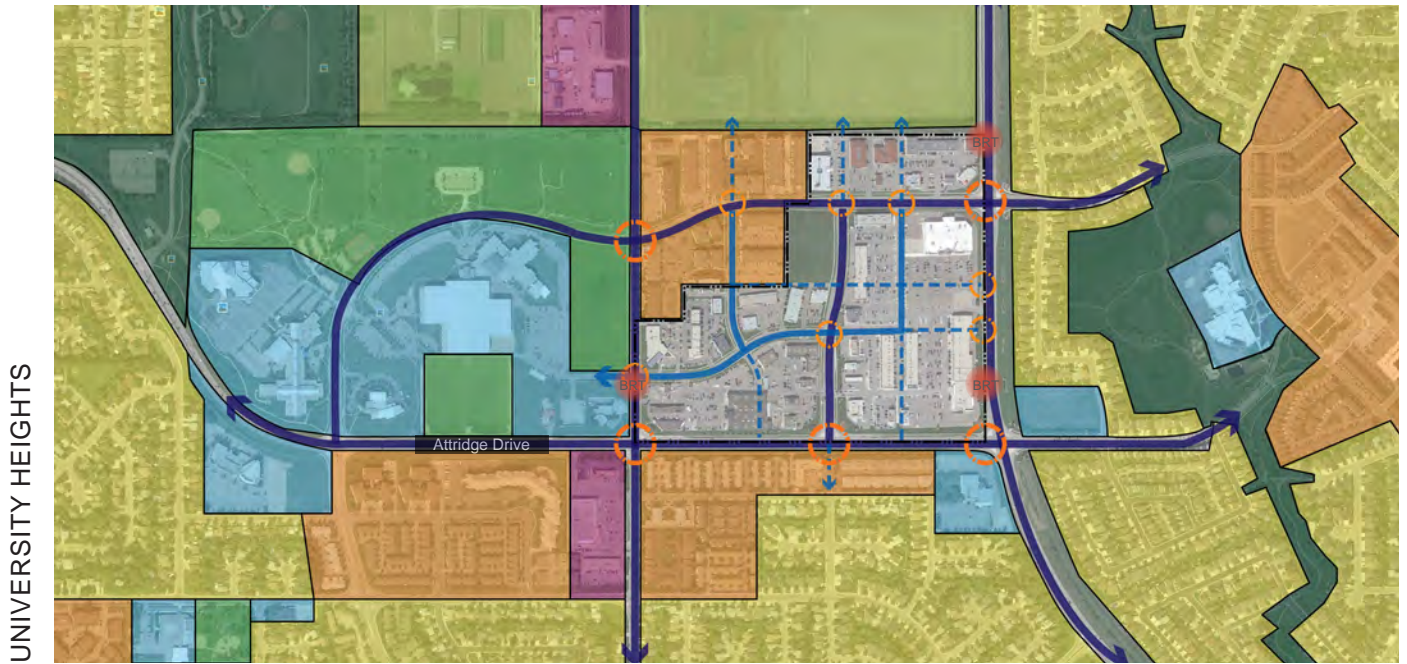


Fig.13 University Heights Opportunities Diagram



**Legend**

- Low-density Residential
- Medium-density Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional/Community Uses
- Agriculture Fields
- School Open Spaces
- Public Parks
- Local Street
- Potential Connection
- Major Street
- Highway
- Primary Gateway
- Secondary Gateway



# 3

## VISION

The Vision and Planning Principles provide a foundation and direction for the Plan, anchoring this decision-making framework. They should guide and shape development projects within the Transit Villages, including the design of new buildings, open spaces, and streetscapes, and the re-configuration of streets and blocks. As over-arching directives for the detailed planning and design of the Transit Villages, the Vision and Principles can be applied to multiple sites and inform all development projects.

The Vision and Planning Principles reflect many important ideas that were discussed and refined in an iterative process with the public and stakeholders. One of the core aspirations they respond to is the desire for more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and interesting places in which to live, shop, and play.

As an overview, this section contains the following:

- Vision Statement
- Planning Principles

### 3.1 Vision Statement

Over the course of the project, and particularly through the engagement process, a clear Vision and Planning Principles were established.

*Transit Villages will be known as active, lively, and vibrant hubs for community life, complementing Saskatoon's character and enhancing the city's quality of life. They will be places where you can live and work as well as shop, linger, and spend an afternoon. Transit Villages will integrate with surrounding neighbourhoods through a walkable and multimodal street network, which builds on the enhanced service and mobility of the Bus Rapid Transit system.*

**Cultivate a diverse mix of uses, and a critical mass of population.**

Transit Villages should accommodate a range of uses to meet the varied needs of the community, and to help create an animated environment throughout the day and evening.



### 3.2 Planning Principles

These Planning Principles build off the Vision and help to guide the design of the Transit Village plans as well as their long-term implementation.

**Create a vibrant community hub and destination.**

Transit Villages will be complete community hubs, providing vibrant mixed-use destinations for people to live, work, visit, linger, and enjoy throughout the year.



**Respond to local needs, complement surrounding neighbourhoods.**

Transit Villages should complement the character of surrounding neighbourhoods by providing uses, amenities, services, and spaces that respond to local needs.





**Encourage design excellence and a welcoming sense of place.**

Transit Villages should convey a high-quality design that contributes to a distinct sense of place. Designed as places where people can linger and spend time, they should provide opportunities for gathering and animation.



**Foster sustainable growth.**

The Transit Villages should foster and encourage growth, but guide development phasing so that it is sustainable over the long-term, mitigating an over/under supply of new commercial and residential space.



**Design for a walkable, multi-modal network.**

Transit Villages should be designed to foster a walkable and pedestrian-oriented movement network that complements the function of the BRT.



**Design for resiliency, sustainability, and adaptability.**

The Transit Villages should implement green development infrastructure, while being designed to withstand extreme storm and climate events.





# 4

## DEMONSTRATION PLANS

The Conceptual and Demonstration Plans in this section are provided to help illustrate the application of the Vision and Principles and one way that development could take place. The City will work with landowners to apply the Vision and Principles for each site through the collaborative development of more detailed development plans.

The plans in this section illustrate many of the aspirations and key ideas that came forward during the engagement process, including: integrating a mix of uses on each site; creating a high-quality and memorable public realm; encouraging sustainable development; managing parking demand and supply; and, supporting a unique character of place at each Transit Village. One of the important qualities of the design for the Transit Villages is their integration with the surrounding urban context, where the public realm, open spaces, and new buildings are seamlessly woven into the surrounding city, while supporting the continued success and quality of surrounding neighbourhoods.

This section provides greater detail on the Demonstration Plan for the following Transit Villages:

- Confederation
- Centre Mall
- University Heights



## 4.1 Confederation Demonstration Plan



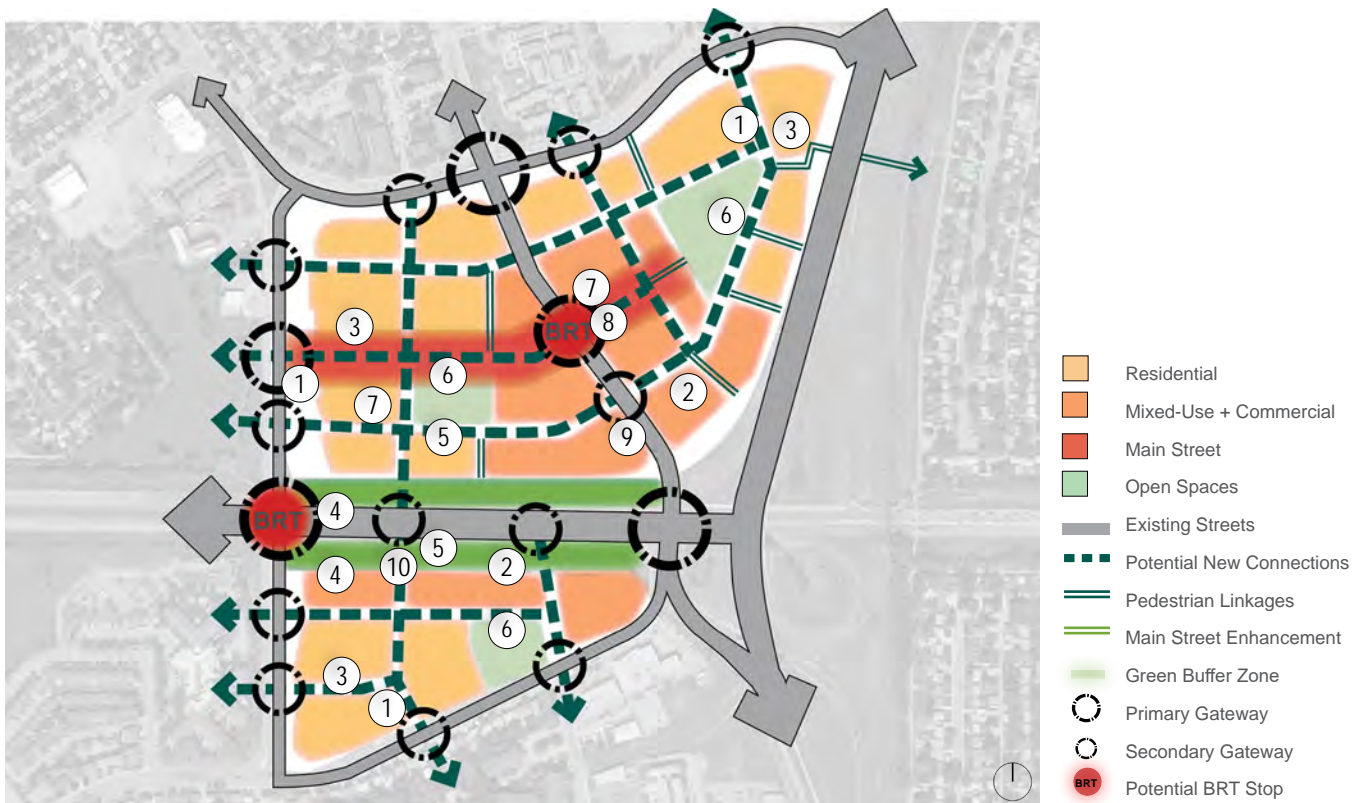
*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*



### 4.1.2 Big Moves

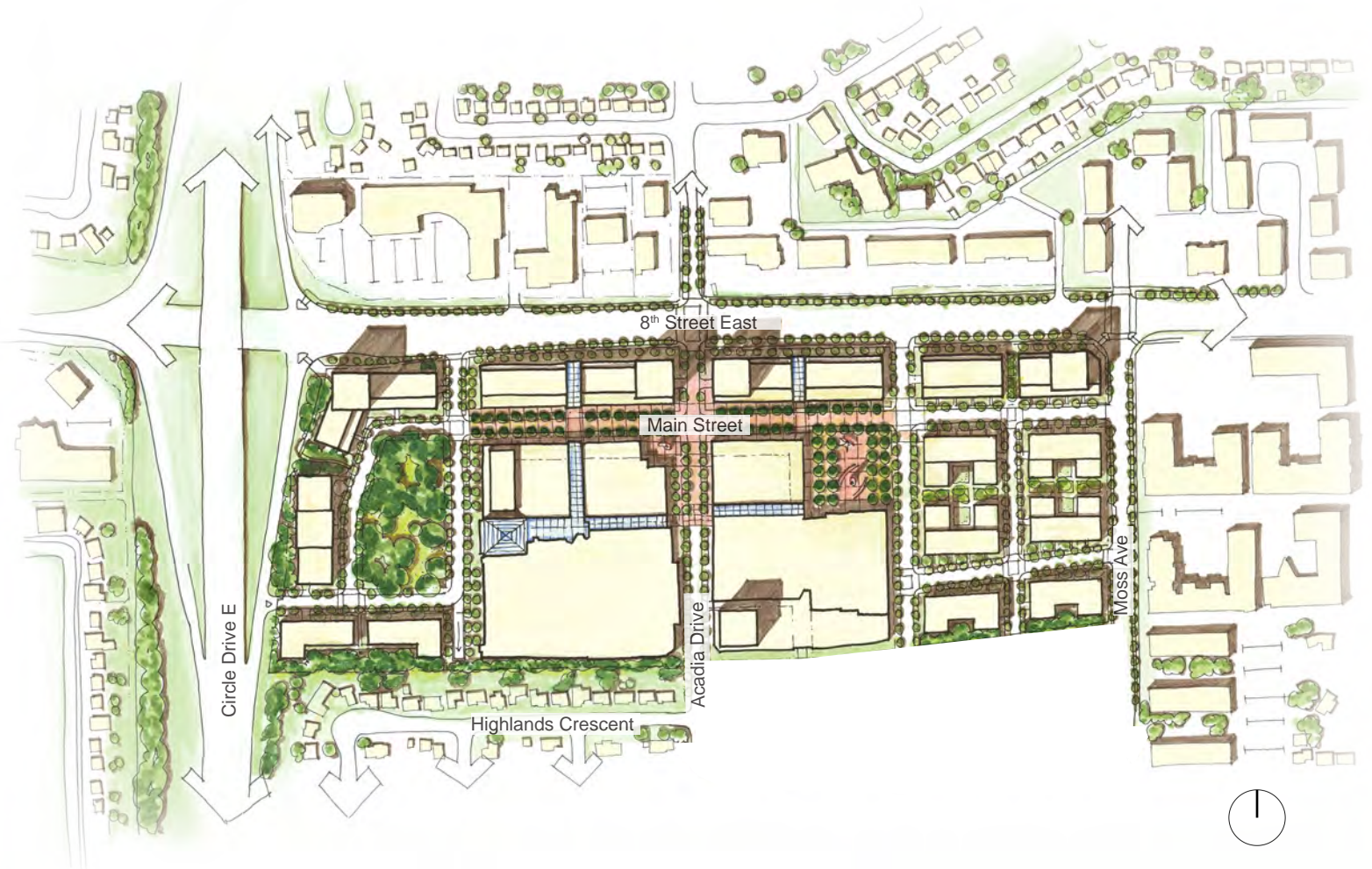
The Confederation Transit Village demonstration plan is based on a series of big moves, as described below:

- ① Implement a fine-grain grid of streets to improve connectivity to the surrounding neighbourhoods and within the site.
- ② Provide mixed-use districts with a range of uses including commercial and residential.
- ③ Encourage higher density residential development to create a critical mass of population and bring vibrancy.
- ④ Design linear greenway and public open space with a multi-use trail connected to the regional trail network to support active transportation.
- ⑤ Provide higher density uses and active frontages along the greenway.
- ⑥ Create new neighbourhood pocket parks and open space amenities.
- ⑦ Establish central community Main Street with active retail frontages at grade and residential or office uses above.
- ⑧ Integrate the Main Street with the BRT stop integrated through design and public realm improvements.
- ⑨ Create key gateways emphasized with taller buildings, public art, and other site improvements.
- ⑩ Establish a new connection across 22nd Street, to better connect the north and south areas.



*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*

## 4.2 Centre Mall Demonstration Plan

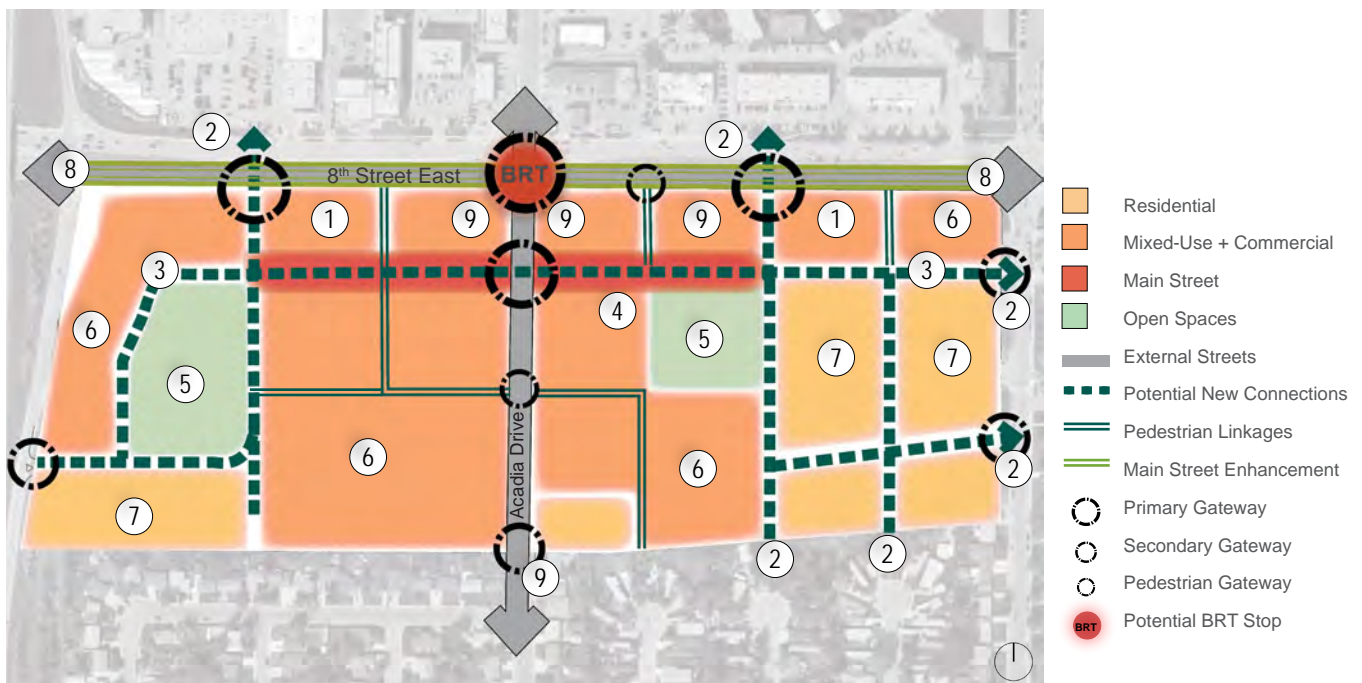


*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*

## 4.2.2 Big Moves

The Centre Mall Transit Village demonstration plan is based on a series of big moves, as described below:

- ① Create a new commercial frontage at grade along 8th Street East, with a more pedestrian-oriented design.
- ② Establish a fine-grain grid of streets to create connections to surrounding neighbourhoods and improve site access and connectivity.
- ③ Create internal east-west street connecting the site, and its neighbourhoods.
- ④ Establish a commercial Main Street with unique local businesses, complementing the commercial activity of larger format retail and remaining mall.
- ⑤ Design open space amenities to support activity and use of the public realm around commercial and residential areas.
- ⑥ Provide mixed-use areas, integrating commercial retail, professional offices, and higher density residential.
- ⑦ Implement a mix of housing typologies and building types in residential areas, to support an affordable community.
- ⑧ Implement streetscaping improvements along 8th Street East, to integrate the BRT with the public realm and make a pedestrian-friendly and safe street.
- ⑨ Plan for taller buildings and higher density development to emphasize gateways and create a sense of entry.



*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*



## 4.3 University Heights Demonstration Plan



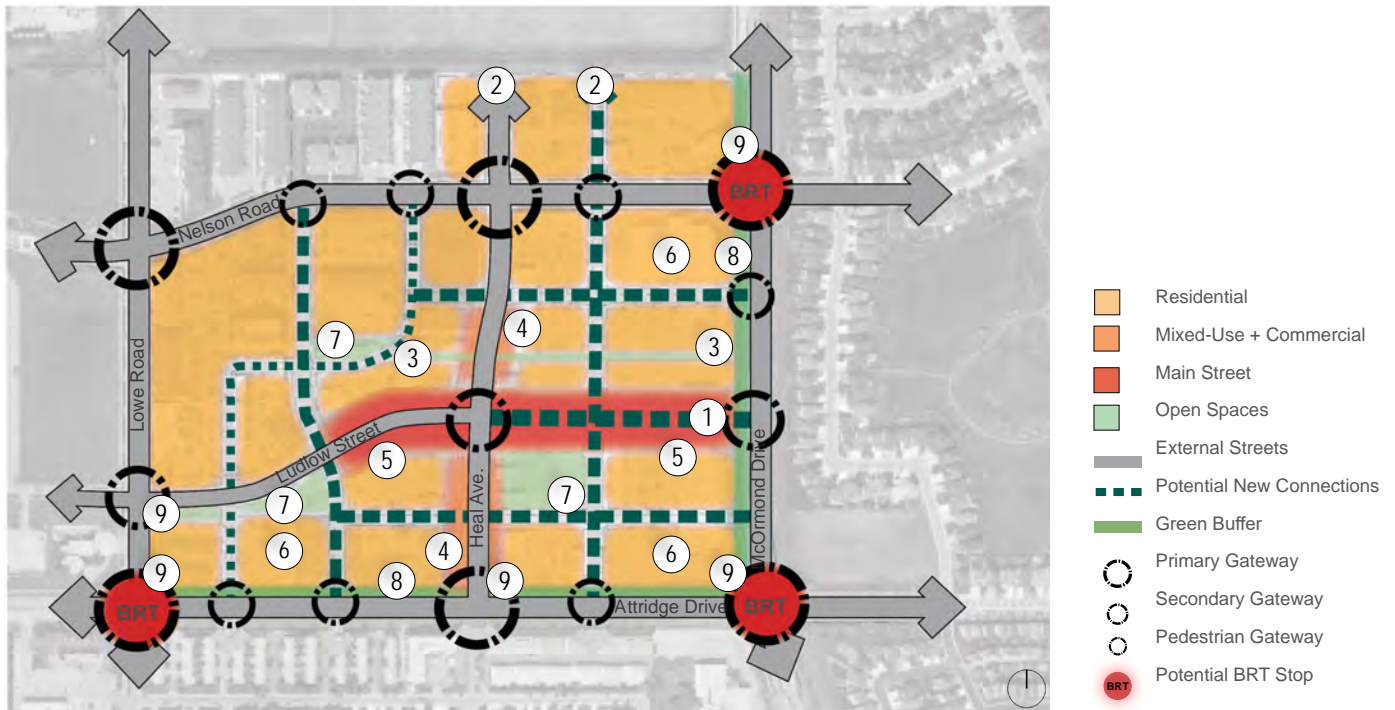
*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*



### 4.3.2 Big Moves

The University Heights Transit Village demonstration plan is based on a series of big moves, as described below:

- ① Extend Ludlow Street across the site to create a key east-west connection.
- ② Create a fine-grain grid of internal streets to improve site connectivity, and extend these streets to surrounding areas, if and when they redevelop.
- ③ Provide a linear open space and east-west mid-block connection to regional trails and the public realm.
- ④ Provide a mixed-use corridor that allows for larger format commercial businesses integrated with residential development. Locate this around Heal Avenue to take advantage of street access and visibility.
- ⑤ Establish a Main Street destination along Ludlow Street, with active retail frontages at grade and residential or office uses above.
- ⑥ Provide multiple opportunities for new housing, in a variety of higher density building types to create a critical mass at the Transit Village and support an animated environment through the day and evening.
- ⑦ Plan for public open spaces that cater to a wider range of needs, offering space for social gathering and passive as well as active recreation.
- ⑧ Implement a green buffer around the edge of the site from adjacent roadways, and leverage it as a multi-use trail connection to integrate with regional networks.
- ⑨ Plan for taller buildings, public art, and pocket parks to define and reinforce gateways to the site and create a sense of entry.



*Note that this plan is included for illustrative purposes, detailed development plans will be prepared during the implementation process with landowners and the community.*



# 5

## BUILT FORM FRAMEWORK

Built Form refers to the buildings, structures, and the general urban fabric that the Transit Villages are comprised of. Built form plays a critical role in defining the quality and type of environment that people will experience, and in realizing the potential for Transit Villages to be inclusive, affordable, and animated places.

The objective of this section is to guide the planning and design of built form in a way that implements best practices in transit-oriented development and design. While the Built Form Framework focuses on buildings and urban blocks, it works in tandem with the Public Realm and Transportation Frameworks to holistically shape the Transit Village environment.

The Built Form Framework provides detailed guidance on:

- Block Structure
- Land Use
- Density and Building Heights
- Building Design



## 5.1 Block Structure

The block structure for the Transit Villages is carefully designed to optimize development opportunities while creating a compact and walkable urban structure. The block structure responds to the geometry of each Transit Village site and their particular constraints and opportunities. While the block structure and alignment of streets is generally fixed in this Plan, the design and configuration of development within each block allows for more flexibility. Indeed, blocks are structured to allow for the integration of multiple uses in horizontal development scenarios and in vertically integrated mixed-use buildings.

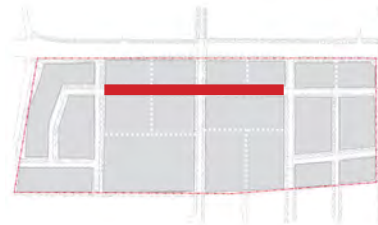
### 5.1.1 Development Guidelines

- **Fine-grain Blocks:** All Transit Villages should implement a fine-grain network of streets and blocks that enable greater connectivity and access, and support a walkable environment. Planned Transit Villages, such as Blairmore and Holmwood, should implement blocks that are approximately 80 - 100 metres deep to efficiently support underground parking.
- **Block Configuration:** The configuration of blocks and streets at each Transit Village should follow a plan structure similar to that shown in figure 14. Blocks have been designed to allow for a range of development proposals, as well as structured parking, on each.
- **Compact and Walkable:** In implementing the block structure outlined in figure 14, plan for blocks and sub-parcels within blocks to articulate compact development forms that define a walkable and pedestrian-oriented environment.
- **Site Planning:** Buildings should be located on a block to define and frame the street and enable mid-block connections and laneway access.
- **Setbacks:** Buildings should generally be setback 3.0 -5.0 m from the property line. Buildings fronting along streets marked as “Commercial/Main Street Setback” should be built to articulate a consistent street wall with little to no setback from the property line. Buildings fronting along all other streets may articulate more variation in their setbacks within the range of 3.0 m –5.0 m.

#### CONFEDERATION



#### CENTRE MALL



#### UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

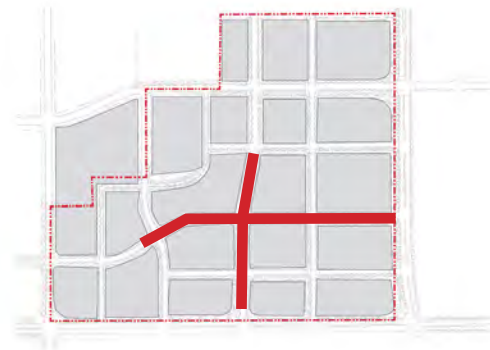


Fig. 14 Transit Village Block structure

## 5.2 Land Use

The land uses within the Transit Villages have been strategically organized to create a complete community and animation of public spaces. This structure offers more opportunities for people to access services, retail amenities, entertainment, and housing.

Transit Villages are mixed-use environments, with a fair amount of surrounding residential development. Land use patterns show the arrangement of residential and commercial uses complemented by outdoor public spaces such as plazas, neighbourhood and linear parks as community focal points.

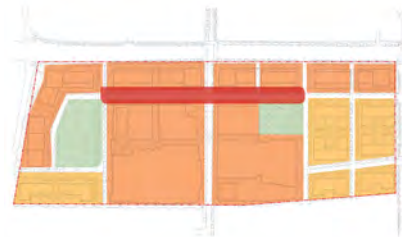
### 5.2.1 Land Use Guidelines

- **Permitted uses:** The Transit Villages are mixed-use environments that allow for a range of non-residential and residential uses at each site as outlined in figure 15. This includes varying scales and types of residential development and commercial development as described below.
- **Auto-oriented uses:** Auto-oriented uses such as car washes, motor vehicle dealers, service stations, and gas bars, and drive-through restaurants, are generally discouraged in the Transit Villages.
- **Main Street:** Each Transit Village has a Main Street, which requires active, grade-oriented commercial uses fronting an intimate, pedestrian-scaled streetscape, and residential uses or professional offices (e.g. medical offices) above. The built form is characterized by a fine-grain of storefronts that accommodate a variety of small-scale commercial retailers (including restaurants) that cater to the needs of the immediate and surrounding community.
- **Mixed-Use:** These areas allow for a range of commercial and residential development opportunities. Contrasting with the Main Street, mixed-use areas also allow for larger format commercial businesses that are integrated with residential development in a pedestrian-oriented design. This may include, as an example, larger scale retailers and major grocery stores.

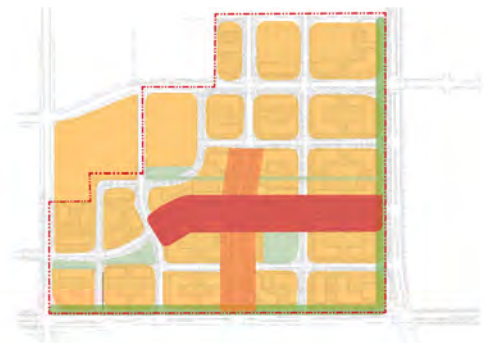
#### CONFEDERATION



#### CENTRE MALL



#### UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



#### Legend

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Main Street  | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Residential    | <span style="color: green;">■</span> Green Buffer            |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Mixed-Use | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Open Space | <span style="border: 1px dashed red;">■</span> Site Boundary |

Fig.15 Transit Village Land Use Structure

- **Residential:** These areas permit a range of housing typologies in a compact and walkable scale that reinforce Saskatoon’s unique identity to build a city that is healthy, inclusive and distinct. In the detailed planning of each site, effort should be made to encourage a variety of building scales, densities and typologies to avoid homogeneity.
- **Open Space and Green Buffer:** These areas are intended for recreational uses and should be designed as universally accessible and inclusive public spaces. They are not permitted for development.
- **Housing Types and Affordability:** In addition to other policy or financial mechanism that the City may implement, the Transit Villages support housing affordability by instituting a range of higher density housing types to accommodate a diverse range of lifestyles and economic means. Single family homes and low-rise building forms are not permitted.
- **Office uses:** The Transit Villages are not anticipated to accommodate large-scale office uses, and these are generally discouraged. The preference would be for these types of development to locate in the city’s central business district. Limited amounts of office development, and professional/medical offices, are permitted in mixed-use areas.



*Precedent: Mid-rise mixed-use building typology, with grade-related retail frontage*



*Precedent: Café space to animate the Main Street*



*Precedent: Townhomes fronting onto green space*



## 5.3 Density and Building Heights

Development density and building heights are structured to create a transition to adjacent areas and respect the character of surrounding neighbourhoods. They are also designed to create a critical mass of population at each Transit Village that will allow the community to thrive. Allowing for higher development densities also creates an incentive for redevelopment, to kick start implementation of the Plan.

### 5.3.1 Height and Density Guidelines

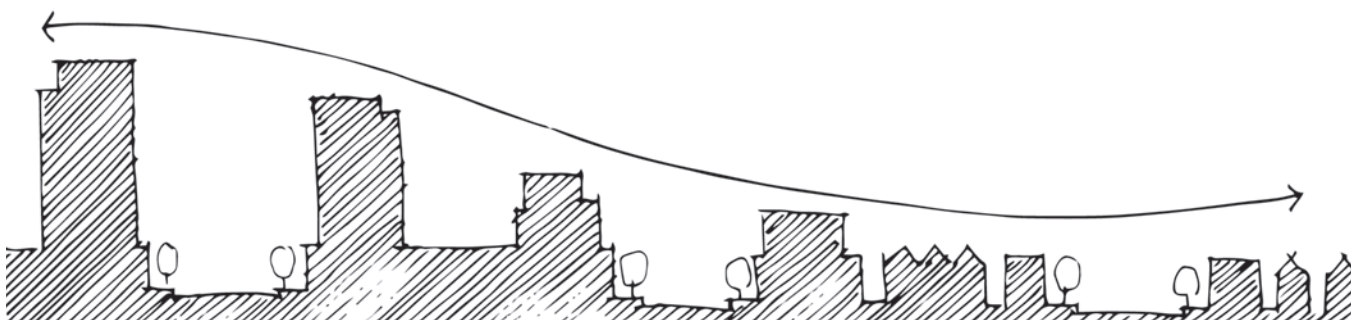
- **Height and Density Strategy:** Each Transit Village has been structured such that its areas of greatest height and density are anchored around mixed-use areas and the Main Street. Building heights transition down, away from these areas, to residential areas that comprise a variety of building typologies.
- **Transition:** Buildings should be transitioned down in height toward existing low-rise neighbourhoods, residential areas, and open spaces (see figure 16).
- **Shadows:** Buildings should be massed and designed in such a way that they minimize shadows cast on surrounding residential neighbourhoods and open spaces.



*Precedent: Higher density residential typology*



*Precedent: Medium density residential typology*



*Fig. 16: Illustrative cross section of how building heights can be transitioned from high-density areas to low-density/low-rise areas*

### 5.3.2 Development Densities

This Plan recommends a range of development density permissions that will achieve the Vision, shifting the Transit Villages to more active, lively, and complete communities. The density permissions are expressed using Floor Area Ratio (FAR), on a block-by-block basis. It is anticipated that in implementing the Plan the City will determine how best to regulate density, whether using FAR or a similar controls.

#### 5.3.2.1 Development Estimates

Based on the proposed density permissions, a high-level estimate of the number of units, population, and commercial gross floor area is also included in a summary table below. Please note the following assumptions that informed this estimate:

- Average gross residential unit size (including corridors, amenity space, etc.) is 88 sq. m. (950 sq. ft.)
- Average occupancy of residential units is 2 persons

Transit Village	Estimated Residential GFA (m2)	Estimated Commercial GFA (m2)	Estimated Units	Estimated Population
Confederation	235,000 - 245,000	45,000 - 55,000	2,500 - 3,000	5,000 - 6,000
Centre Mall	90,000 - 100,000	45,000 - 55,000	1,000 - 1,500	2,000 - 3,000
University Heights	225,000 - 235,000	40,000 - 50,000	2,400 - 2,900	4,800 - 5,800

#### 5.3.2.2 Development Density Guidelines

- **Recommended FAR:** the recommended FAR for each block within the Transit Villages is outlined in the tables at right.
- **Land use ratios:** recommended ratios of residential to non-residential FAR are also outlined in figures 17 to 19. These are designed to achieve a desired balance between residential and non-residential growth.
- **Lot coverage and site planning:** Undeveloped open spaces should be organized at the block and site plan level to create courtyards and outdoor amenity spaces. Parking should be provided for underground and on streets, with the possible exception of accessible parking spaces provided in small lots.



Fig. 17: Confederation block plan and recommended FAR

Block #	TOTAL FAR	RES. FAR	COMM. FAR
C1	1.25	1.25	
C2	1.25	1	0.25
C3	1.25	1	0.25
C4	1	1	
C5	1.25	1.25	
C6	1.5	1	0.5
C7	Open Space		
C8	1.25	1.25	
C9	2	1.5	0.5
C10	1.75	1.25	0.5
C11	1.5	1	0.5
C12	1.25	1.25	
C13	2	1.5	0.5
C14	1.75	1.25	0.5
C15	2	1.15	0.75
C16	1.25	1	0.25
C17	1.25	1	0.25
C18	Open Space		
C19	1.25	1.25	
C20	1.25	1.25	
C21	1.25	1.25	
C22	1.25	1.25	
C23	1.25	1.25	
C24	1.25	1.25	
C25	1.25	1.25	
C26	1.25	1.25	
C27	1.25	1	0.25
C28	1.25	1	0.25
C29	1.25	1	0.25
C30	Open Space		
C31	2	1.5	0.75



Fig. 18: Centre Mall block plan and recommended FAR

Block #	TOTAL FAR	RES. FAR	COMM. FAR
CM 1	1.25	1.25	
CM 2	1.5	1.5	
CM 3	1.25	1.25	
CM 4	1.5	1.5	
CM 5	1.5	1.5	
CM 6	0.75		0.75
CM 7	2	1.75	0.25

Block #	TOTAL FAR	RES. FAR	COMM. FAR
CM 8	0.75		0.75
CM 9	2	1.75	0.25
CM 10	2	1.75	0.25
CM 11	Open Space		
CM 12	2	1.75	0.25
CM 13	1.5		1



Fig. 19: University Heights block plan and recommended FAR

Block #	TOTAL FAR	RES. FAR	COMM. FAR
UH 1	1.25	1.25	
UH 2	1.25	1.25	
UH 3	1.5	1.5	
UH 4	1.25	1.25	
UH 5	Open Space		
UH 6	2	1.5	0.5
UH 7	2	1.5	0.5
UH 8	1.5	1.25	0.25
UH 9	1.25	1.25	
UH 10	1.25	1.25	
UH 11	2	1.5	0.5

Block #	TOTAL FAR	RES. FAR	COMM. FAR
UH 12	2	1.5	0.5
UH 12A	Open Space		
UH 13	1.5	1.25	0.25
UH 14	1.25	1.25	
UH 15	1.25	1.25	
UH 16	1.25	1	0.25
UH 17	1.25	1	0.25
UH 18	2	1.5	0.5
UH 19	2	1.5	0.5
UH 20	1.5	1.5	



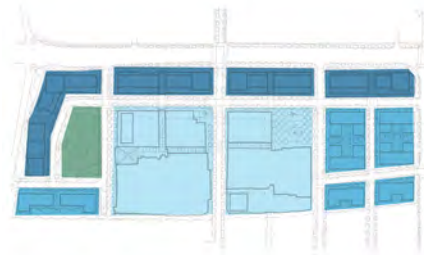
### 5.3.3 Building Height Guidelines

- **Maximum heights:** A recommended height range is outlined in the building height Plan diagrams at right. This range includes a recommended upper limit for building heights.
- **Minimum heights:** The minimum height for new buildings should be 2 storeys, except for community or public facilities, or portions of existing malls structure that are to be retained and integrated with a mixed-use development, such as at Centre Mall.
- **Tall buildings:** In general, buildings taller than 6 storeys are discouraged, because it is anticipated that they would over-saturate the market with supply and limit the development potential of adjacent blocks. Buildings 6 storeys and under may also be built using wood frame construction, which is generally less expensive than concrete construction, improving development economics and housing affordability. Over time, as the Plan evolves and is implemented, there may be some opportunity for taller buildings at key gateways and intersections.
- **Development intensification:** The highest density development, particularly that integrates residential, should be clustered around the Main Street and commercial areas.
- **Human Scale:** Human-scale and low to mid-rise developments should be encouraged, while taking advantage of opportunities to increase density in areas close to Main Streets and commercial hubs.
- **Stepbacks:** Development taller than 4 storeys should implement a stepback of 3 - 5 m from building elevations adjacent to a street.

CONFEDERATION



CENTRE MALL



UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



**Legend**

- 
 4 - 6 Storeys
  2 - 3 Storeys
- 
 2 - 4 Storeys
  Open Space

Fig.20 Transit Villages Height Plan

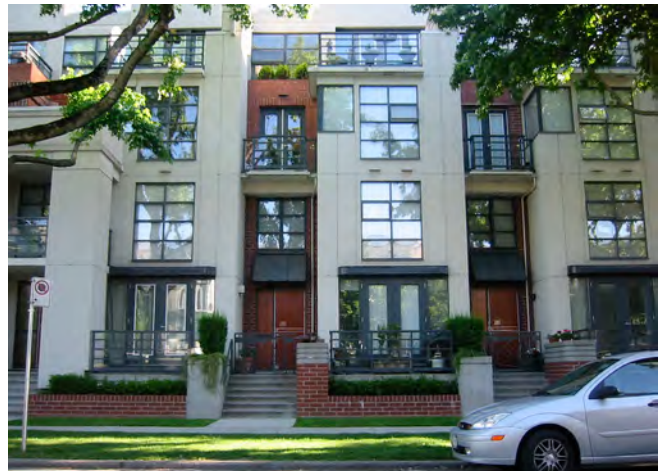
## 5.4 Building Design

### 5.4.1 Building Design Guidelines

- **Frame public spaces:** Buildings should frame and define adjacent public spaces, including streetscapes and open spaces, and be oriented to address adjacent public streets.
- **Entrances:** All buildings should address adjacent public streets in their form, and include a visible and well-defined entrance.
- **Frontages:** All buildings should have a relationship to adjacent public spaces, defined by windows and doors that facilitate visual and physical connections between indoor and outdoors. Residential buildings such as semi-detached homes or townhomes should have parking located behind the house, and accessed of a laneway, so that a garage does not dominate the building frontage.

### 5.4.2 Main Street Design Guidelines

- **Active Frontages:** Buildings fronting onto the Main Street in each Transit Village should be designed with “active” frontages that consist of the following design features:
  - **Transparency:** frontages should have a high degree of transparency facing the street, with approximately 70% - 90% of the facade at-grade devoted to glazing.
  - **Fine-grain:** commercial blocks should be relatively close in proximity, with narrow frontages, frequent storefronts and minimal setbacks from the street that are conducive to small to medium-sized retailers and businesses.
  - **Entrances:** buildings should be designed with a regular and frequent pattern of entrances, commensurate with their fine-grain storefronts to provide physical permeability and connections to the Main Street.



*Precedent: Residential building with pedestrian-friendly relationship to street, including an entrance and patio*



*Precedent: Mixed-use building with active frontage and retail space at grade*



*Precedent: High quality building facade fronting the street*

### 5.4.4 Materials

Buildings should be designed with high-quality and durable materials, and make use of locally available and sustainable building materials wherever possible. Materials should be selected that are appropriate to the building function, street frontage and face orientations such as sun, light, views and noise. Consideration should be given to the life-cycle of materials and their ability to be repaired.

### 5.4.5 Loading and Servicing

Transit Village service areas should be designed as safe pedestrian friendly environments. This can be achieved by locating service areas in back lanes, away from high pedestrian traffic areas and using high-quality materials to screen service areas.



# 6

## OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK

Open spaces refers to all areas of the Transit Villages that aren't buildings, this includes parks, plazas, courtyards, mid-block connections, pathways, and streets. These spaces play a critical role in creating a livable and beautiful environment, because they constitute the public spaces of the Transit Villages, where people come together, linger, shop, and play. It is important that these spaces are designed as accessible, welcoming, and flexible spaces that can be used by all, and at all times of the year. Open spaces are also an essential component of creating a successful development, and consideration has been given to how they can be implemented within each block and building.

This section guides the design, configuration, and structure of open spaces in a way the complements the built form and movement frameworks, and implements the Vision.

The Open Space Framework provides guidance on:

- Open Space Typologies
- Open Space Design

## 6.1 Open Space Typologies

Transit Villages provide a diverse range of open spaces that support a variety of recreational activities, community gathering, and contribute to a high-quality place. These open spaces have been configured to help integrate the Transit Villages with their surrounding context, by making physical connections to trails, parks, and neighbourhoods, and creating memorable spaces that draw the community in, where they can spend time. The network consists of the following type of open spaces: Neighbourhood Pocket Parks, Urban Plazas, Green Buffers, and Courtyards.

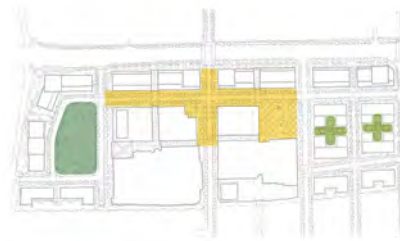
### 6.1.1 Overall Typology Guidelines

- **Natural Systems:** All open spaces, should be designed and managed to support and enhance natural systems and ecological functions, including but not limited to: creating a robust tree canopy; managing storm water; preserving wildlife habitat corridors; and, protecting habitat for indigenous species.
- **Adaptability:** All open spaces, especially Neighbourhood Pocket Parks and Urban Plazas, should be designed as flexible and adaptive spaces that can support a variety of formal and informal uses, such as play, recreation, and gatherings of varying sizes. Urban Plazas should primarily be open, but may include a structure that supports their design intent/function, such as a pavilion.

CONFEDERATION



CENTRE MALL



UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



**Legend**

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Neighbourhood Pocket Parks and Green Buffers | Green Buffer |
| Privately Owned/ Publicly Accessible         | Urban Plaza  |

Fig.21: Transit Village Open Spaces

## 6.1.2 Neighbourhood Pocket Parks

Neighbourhood Pocket Parks are local recreational amenities, that provide places for people to play, relax, have a picnic, or take their pets for a walk. They are larger in size than an Urban Plaza, and under the guidelines of the Plan, are intended for an urban infill and intensification context. They are designed for adaptability and flexibility, to suit the needs of multiple users, throughout the year. Each park is an opportunity to provide distinct amenities that cultivate a unique character reflecting its adjacent uses. Neighbourhood Pocket Parks also fulfill important ecological functions and are home to plants and animals which help support a healthy ecosystem. They improve air quality, mitigate urban heat island effects, and support the natural infiltration of rainwater and snow melt.

### 6.1.2.1 Neighbourhood Pocket Park Guidelines

- **Adaptability:** Neighbourhood Pocket Parks should be designed and planned for flexible and adaptive use, throughout the year. In this regard they should be designed, to the extent feasible, to support a variety of uses rather than being dedicated to one use.
- **Meeting Community Needs:** As the Transit Villages communities grow, neighbourhood pocket parks should be planned and designed comprehensively to address a range of needs in each community.
- **Natural Systems:** Neighbourhood Pocket Parks should be designed and managed to support and enhance natural systems and ecological functions, including but not limited to the tree canopy, storm water, wildlife corridors, and supporting habitat for indigenous species.
- **Park Access:** Confederation, Centre Mall, and University Heights Transit Villages have been designed to have public open spaces within approximately a 5-minute walking distance of all areas of the site. Future Transit Villages, including Holmwood and Blairmore should apply this same principle.
- **Park Size:** Neighbourhood Pocket Parks may vary in size, but should generally be 6,000 sq.m. - 12,000 sq.m. in size. Design quality and investment in the public space is also important, and a larger park, shouldn't be used as a rationale for a lower-quality design.



*Precedent: multi-purpose neighbourhood pocket park fronted with active uses*



*Precedent: Opportunities for formal play areas*



*Precedent: Providing robust habitat and strengthening local ecological systems*



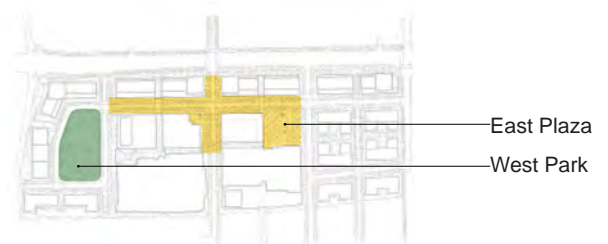
### 6.1.2.2 Neighbourhood Pocket Park Character

- **Confederation:** has three Neighbourhood Pocket Parks (figure 22):
  - **East Park**, serves as a gateway to the Main Street, and a destination for community gatherings and special events, as well as local neighbourhood uses.
  - **West Park**, is an important anchor point to the Main Street and, together with the East Park, is on of Confederation Transit Village’s destinations for larger events, such as markets.
  - **South Park**, is primarily intended to serve as a local park, albeit one that is positioned to invite use by the surrounding community. It provides opportunities for active and passive recreation.
- **Centre Mall:** has two Neighbourhood Pocket Parks, one on either side of Acadia Drive:
  - **East Plaza**, is a more intensive urban gathering area that could support festivals, markets, and larger gatherings of people, as well as the casual lingering and gathering of people.
  - **West Park**, this park is oriented more to neighbourhood residential uses, providing a flexible and large green space for play and relaxation.
- **University Heights:** has two Neighbourhood Pocket Parks and a unique greenway:
  - **East Park**, is a central point for community gathering and special events. Located long Main Street, this park will be used by visitors to the Transit Village as much as by residents.
  - **West Park**, is a local park, catering to nearby residents and those looking for a relaxed environment.
  - **The Greenway**, is a unique open space within University Heights. It is a verdant green space and active transportation corridor for cyclists and pedestrians. It connects several courtyards across three blocks to create a complementary park space to the other Neighbourhood Parks at University Heights. Opportunities for gathering are provided along its edge.

#### CONFEDERATION



#### CENTRE MALL



#### UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS



Fig.22: Transit Village Neighbourhood Pocket Parks

### 6.1.3 Urban Plaza

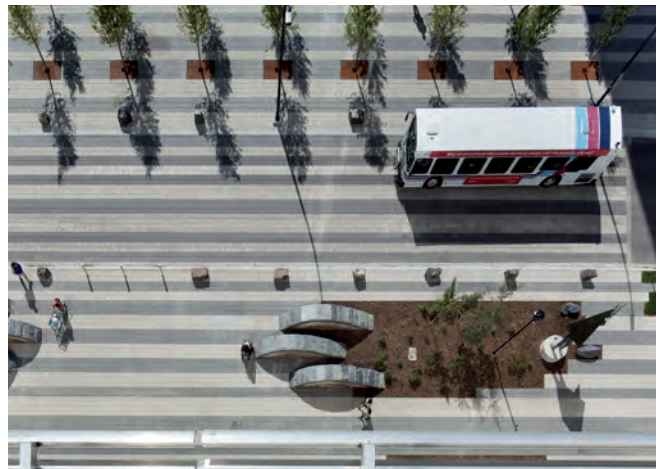
The Urban Plaza meshes streetscape and park space to create a lively and memorable space for special events, festivals, shopping, and day-to-day public life. These are predominantly hard-scaped areas that support a high degree of activity and foot traffic, for programming such as: farmers markets, block parties, concerts, or even temporary recreation uses like a skateboard or bmx park. Urban Plazas should be designed as year-round public gathering spaces, with consideration for providing uses through all seasons of the year. This may include, for example, farmers markets or concerts during the summer, skating rinks and Christmas markets during the winter. Urban Plazas overlap with streetscapes, specifically the Main Street in each Transit Village, which could be closed to vehicles for special events.

#### 6.1.3.1 Urban Plaza Guidelines

- **Function:** Urban Plazas should be designed to enable more intensive gatherings of people, but some allowance of planting should be made around the plaza edge to create wind breaks and shade.
- **Design Quality:** Urban Plazas should feature high-quality streetscaping treatments that create a memorable place, and support flexible use and special programming, like closing them for special events, such as a market.
- **Pedestrian-friendly:** Urban Plazas should be designed to support the frequent crossing and use of the roadway by pedestrians. Steps should be taken to slow traffic down and encourage shared use of the space. Design features may include: bollards, gentle roll curbs, pedestrian-oriented lighting, and special pavement treatments.



*Precedent: Memorable open spaces, that can be a focal point for gathering and activity*



*Precedent: High-quality pedestrian-friendly streetscaping, conducive to public events and gatherings*



*Precedent: Unique plaza transformed into outdoor winter market and skating rink*

## 6.1.4 Green Buffer

Confederation and University Heights have Green Buffers along their perimeter from adjacent arterial roads. These spaces also serve as activity corridors with trails that connect to the wider system and support cycling, walking, and other active transit modes.

### 6.1.4.1 Green Buffer Guidelines

- **Function:** Green Buffers create a green landscaped face to the surrounding community, cultivating a welcoming environment. As part of the open space network, they also serve as important transition spaces to surrounding areas, facilitating connections to regional trails, paths, and parks.
- **Design:** Green Buffers should be designed as a primarily naturalized landscape, with a high density of plantings, to create a park-like environment. They should also include relatively wide multi-use trails, to be used by pedestrians and cyclists. Trails and gathering areas within the buffer space should be illuminated, for safe use at all times.



*Precedent: Green Buffer with multi-use trail*

## 6.1.5 Courtyards

Each development should provide for courtyard space as an immediately accessible amenity for residents. These spaces should be aligned as blocks are developed in order to facilitate mid-block connections. In general courtyards are more intimate and private green space amenities. Although they are privately owned, provisions should be made for public access and use.

### 6.1.5.1 Courtyards Guidelines

- **Function:** Courtyards serve as local and easily accessible open space amenities, as well as facilitating mid-block connections to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
- **Design:** Courtyards can be designed to reflect the character of the development or building that they are associated with. Some common features should include: pedestrian-scale lighting, seating, and plantings or furnishings to create shade.
- **Location:** As all development in the Transit Villages is to be pedestrian-oriented, and relatively close to the street, it is anticipated that courtyards will be internal to a development block, connected to the street by mid-block connections, and that each block will include a central courtyard.



*Precedent: Residential courtyard*



## 6.2 Open Space Design

In addition to the typology-specific guidelines, this section outlines key design principles that apply to all open spaces. An important principle in this regard is designing for all seasons, specifically considering how open spaces and the buildings that frame them can support public outdoor use throughout the year.

### 6.2.1 Winter Design Strategies

Winter is viewed by many as an obstacle to enjoying the outdoors. There are several design strategies that can help embrace winter and find ways to enjoy it:

- **Design for All Seasons:** open spaces should be comfortable and flexible spaces that can be used in all conditions, and in all seasons.
- **Snow Clearance:** Streets, sidewalks, and plazas or hard surface spaces should be designed for efficient snow clearance in winter. For enhanced streetscapes where unit pavers are included in the design, consideration should be given to installing an appropriate sub-surface construction that mitigates heaving.
- **Southern Exposure:** Maximize the southern exposure of open spaces to take advantage of sunlight.
- **Wind protection:** Open spaces should include protective measures against wind, snow, and rain. Trees can be used as wind breaks and points of interest in the winter months.
- **Winter Activities:** Winter infrastructure should include ice rinks and other spaces for winter sports and activities. Snow mounds can be incorporated for playing and blocking the wind.
- **Trees:** plant deciduous trees next to buildings, streets, and open spaces to allow sunlight to penetrate during the winter. Coniferous trees could be planted as wind breaks in certain locations around public open spaces.



*Precedent: Flexible spaces that can be programmed seasonally*



*Precedent: Using deciduous trees to allow for more sunlight penetration to paths and trails during winter*



*Precedent: Using public art to create destinations and support special events and activities*



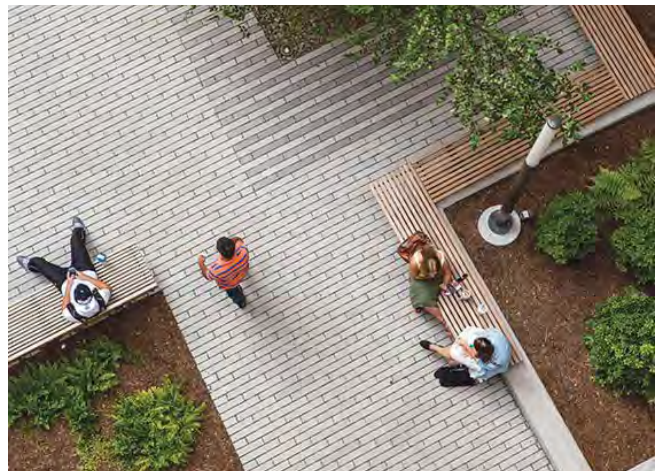
## 6.2.2 Landscape Design Guidelines

Open spaces in the Transit Villages each present an opportunity to reflect and enhance the character of the buildings and uses that surround it. In this way open spaces help become focal points for defining the character and sense of place of the Transit Villages, and areas within them. An open space's character is driven largely by its design, including for both soft and hard landscapes.

- **Design Quality:** Open spaces should convey a sense of design quality and investment. Furnishings, light standards, landscape treatments, and paving should be high quality and durable.
- **Minimizing Clutter:** The design of open spaces, particularly streetscapes, should minimize clutter within the public realm, by consolidating essential fixtures and clustering them together. Examples of this would be waste receptacles, light standards, newspaper boxes, fire hydrants, etc.
- **Seating and Shelter:** Most open spaces should include several options for people to sit down as well as take shelter from the sun, or elements.
- **Native Trees/Planting:** To encourage a sustainable approach landscaping, native trees and plants should be used that are suitable to Saskatoon and its climate. Landscaping should be selected and designed to minimize irrigation requirements.
- **Storm Water:** Integration of Low-impact Development principles and guidelines should be considered, and undertaken as feasible.



*Precedent: Unique paving to reinforce a sense of place*



*Precedent: High-quality fixtures and paving*



*Precedent: Integrated seating, planting, and lighting area, to minimize clutter*



*Precedent: Bio-swale integrated in streetscape to manage stormwater*

### 6.2.3 Lighting Guidelines

Lighting is an important aspect of how open spaces are perceived, determining whether they are seen as inviting, warm, or cold and unsafe. Selection of lighting should be integrated with a holistic understanding of the development and urban design plan for a site. Fixtures are required to be durable, energy efficient and improve the safety of the public realm.

- **Pedestrian-Scale:** Lighting in public spaces should be pedestrian-scaled, to create an inviting space and sense of ambiance for users. Along streetscapes, such as the Urban Plaza, pedestrian-realm lighting may be mounted to buildings.
- **Lighting for Safety:** All Transit Village's streets, paths, and open spaces should be well-lit to support safety and security, especially in winter when daylight hours are short.
- **Light Pollution:** Light fixtures should be selected to minimize light pollution, in line with Dark-Sky Standards.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Energy efficient lights and light fixtures should be utilized wherever possible, to minimize excess energy usage.

### 6.2.4 Public Art

Public art serves multiple objectives. It helps define a sense of place, it provides visual interest, and in some cases, a whimsical character to public spaces. For important parks, plazas, and other destinations, interactive public art can be an important driver of animation in the space.

- **Provision:** Public art should be provided in all major open spaces, and neighbourhood pocket parks. Gateways, such as those identified in section 7.1 are also good locations for public art. Selection of public art should include multiple voices and representation from the local arts community.
- **Function:** In addition to its intrinsic function as a piece of art, public art can also contribute to achieving multiple place-making objectives, such as: creating a wayfinding marker to help people navigate; and, providing a unique element in a public space; encouraging public gathering, play, and activity.



*Precedent: Pedestrian-scale lighting*



*Precedent: Using public art to create a sense of place, and emphasize connections and gateways*





# 7

## MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Streets, paths, trails, parking lots, mid-block connections, and sidewalks together constitute the movement network in the Transit Villages. These spaces, particularly streets and trails, also serve as public spaces in their own right, affording opportunities for social gathering, and recreation, in addition to their role facilitating movement. Aside from supporting these functions, the movement network has been designed to support a number of travel modes, including transit use, walking, cycling, and driving. The network is designed to support the successful operation of the Bus Rapid Transit system, enabling users to use different modes throughout the day and evening.

The Movement Framework works in tandem with the Built Form and Open Space Framework to implement the Vision for the Transit Villages, cultivating an active and lively character of place. A key element in this regard is the character and function of streets, which are designed to safely accommodate all transportation modes, while also supporting an animated public realm.

The Movement Framework provides detailed guidance on:

- Street Hierarchy
- Active Transportation
- Public Transit and BRT
- Vehicles and Parking

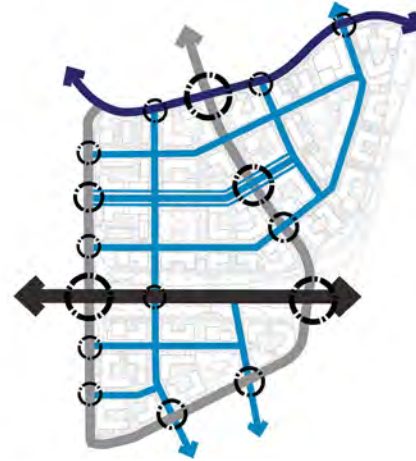
## 7.1 Street Hierarchy

The recommended street hierarchy supports a more walkable and pedestrian-oriented environment, while defining a distinct character and role for streets that responds to planned adjacent development. The street hierarchy is created specifically for the Transit Villages however, the street sections correspond to complete street typologies found in the 2017 City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design & Policy Guide.

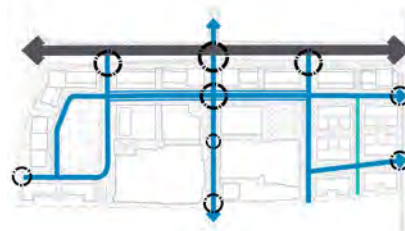
### 7.1.1 General Guidelines

- **Primary Street Plus:** 22nd Street West is unique in its design and function from other Primary Streets, generally being a larger right-of-way. This Plan introduces a wider range of active transportation uses along this corridor, and improving its design to present a more welcoming edge condition to the Confederation Transit Village.
- **Primary Street:** The Primary Street type is anticipated to handle the highest volume of movement. These streets typically lie at the perimeter of Transit Villages and are one of the primary routes by which people will arrive to the Transit Village.
- **Secondary Street:** The Secondary Street type is a key connection through the Transit Village sites, enabling larger volumes of people to move between destinations in the Transit Village. It is anticipated that several of these street types would accommodate cycling facilities as well as sidewalks and vehicular traffic.
- **Main Street:** The Main Street type is a special destination street that facilitates its use a shopping area and public destination. Provisions are made for wider setbacks and improved streetscaping to create a lively and active environment.
- **Local Streets:** The Local Street type accommodates local access to mixed-use areas. It includes variations based on a 20 metre and 16 metre right-of-way.
- **Primary and Secondary Gateways:** These help to mark locations where significant amounts of people will be arriving to the Transit Villages, whether by bus, bicycle, foot, or car. As gateways they include design features in built form, wayfinding features, and public art, that help to create a sense of arrival.

#### CONFEDERATION



#### CENTRE MALL



#### UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

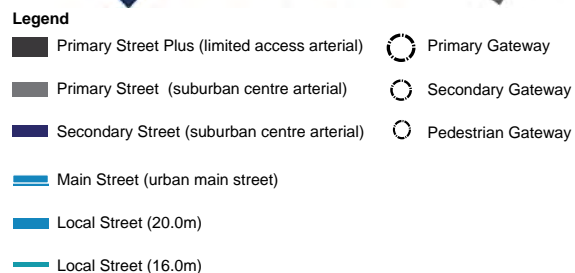
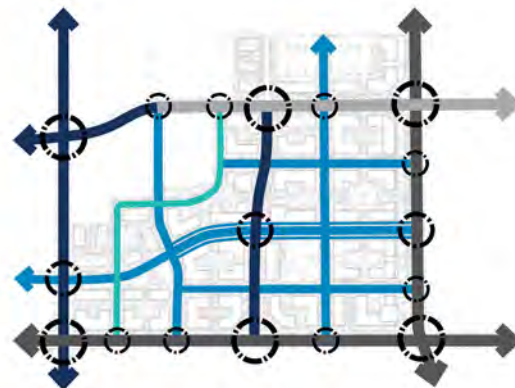


Fig.23: Transit Village Street Hierarchy





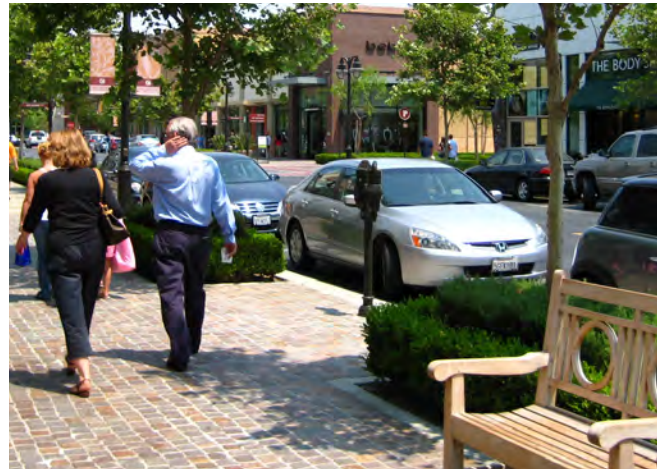
*Precedent: Green buffers alongside roadways*



*Precedent: Main Street with wide sidewalk/public realm*



*Precedent: Protected cycling lane*



*Precedent: Main Street with on-street parking*



*Precedent: Enhanced pedestrian crossing*



*Precedent: Residential Street with on-street parking*



## 7.1.2 Street Sections

The street sections in this section are included for illustrative purposes to share a potential option for configuring a right-of-way and demonstrate its feasibility. Parallel city projects such as the BRT and Corridor Planning will confirm the design of streets.

### 7.1.2.1 Primary Street Plus 22nd Street West (Confederation)

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Limited Access Arterial**.

**Land Uses:** Retail, office, and residential

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, heavy vehicles, and buses. Multi-use pathways or sidewalks and protected bicycle lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.

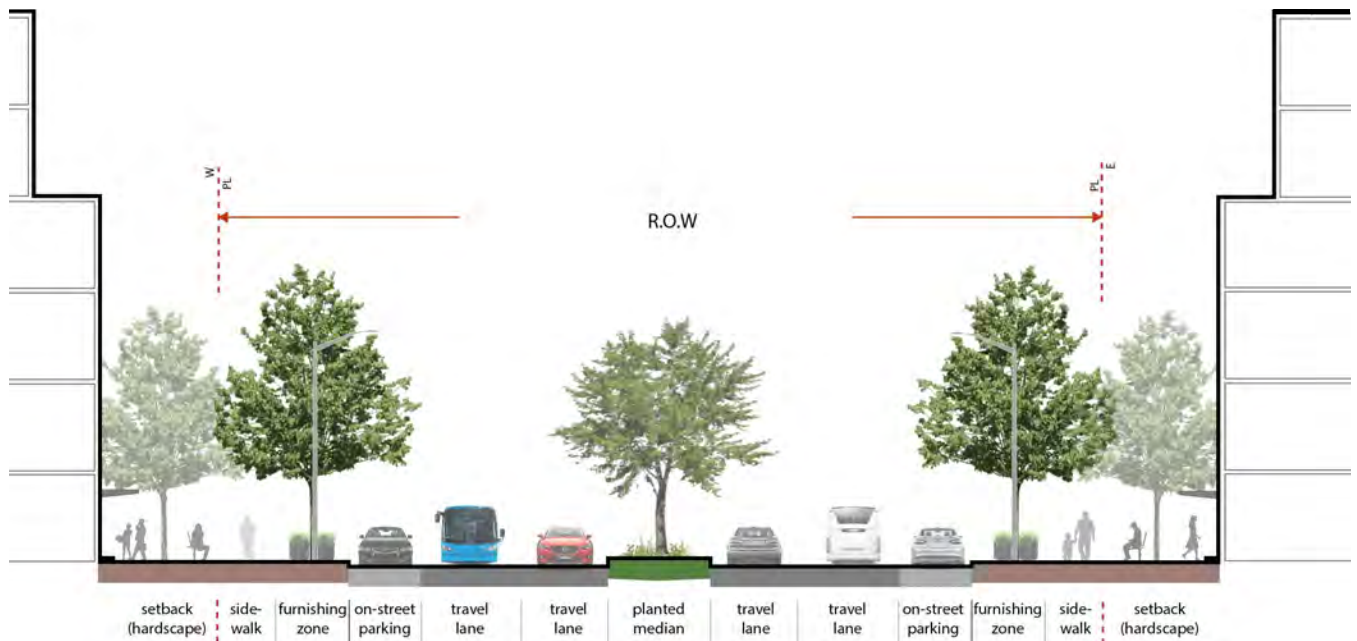
### 7.1.2.2 Primary Circulation

#### Confederation Drive

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Suburban Centre Arterial**.

**Land Uses:** Surrounded by commercial, retail, and office with medium density residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, frequent or rapid transit with transit priority treatments. Pedestrian facilities on both sides of the street. Cycling facilities may be provided where required to align with and support the network. Where not required on-street parking may be provided instead.



Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.



### Diefenbaker Drive

This road has two road typologies defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide. The northern part of the road shown in the diagram is defined as a **Suburban Centre Arterial** and the southern part of the road is defined as a **City Arterial**.



#### Diefenbaker Drive (north)

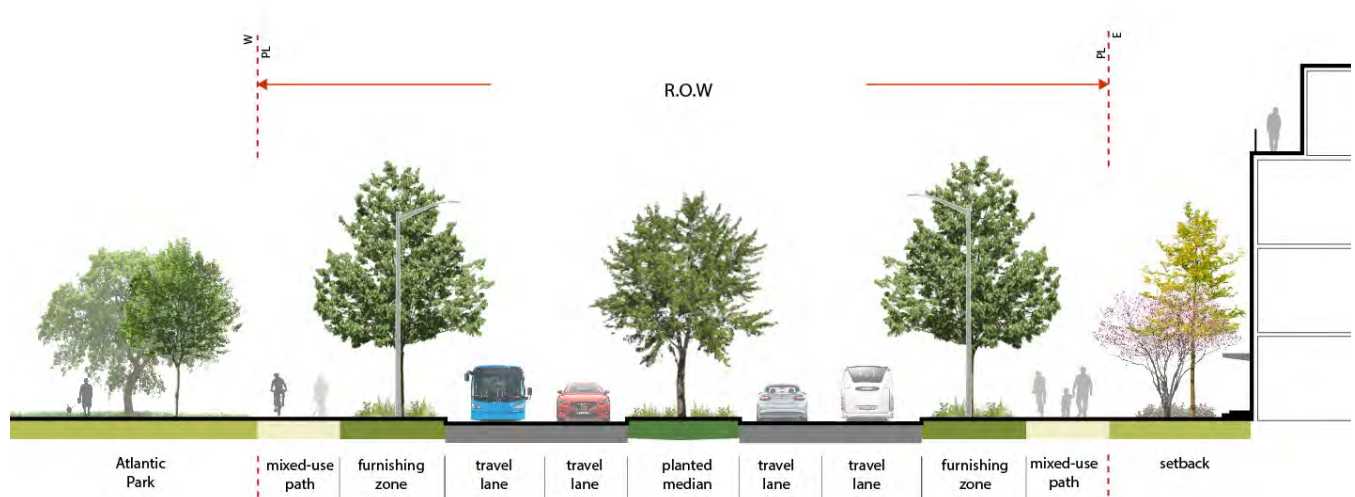
**Land Uses:** Surrounded by commercial, retail, and office with medium density residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, frequent or rapid transit with transit priority treatments. Dedicated pedestrian and bicycling facilities are required.

#### Fairlight Drive (south)

**Land Uses:** Integrated with mixture of retail, office, and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars and heavy vehicles. If transit is present, priority treatments required for stations and stops. Multi-use pathways or sidewalks and protected bicycle lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.

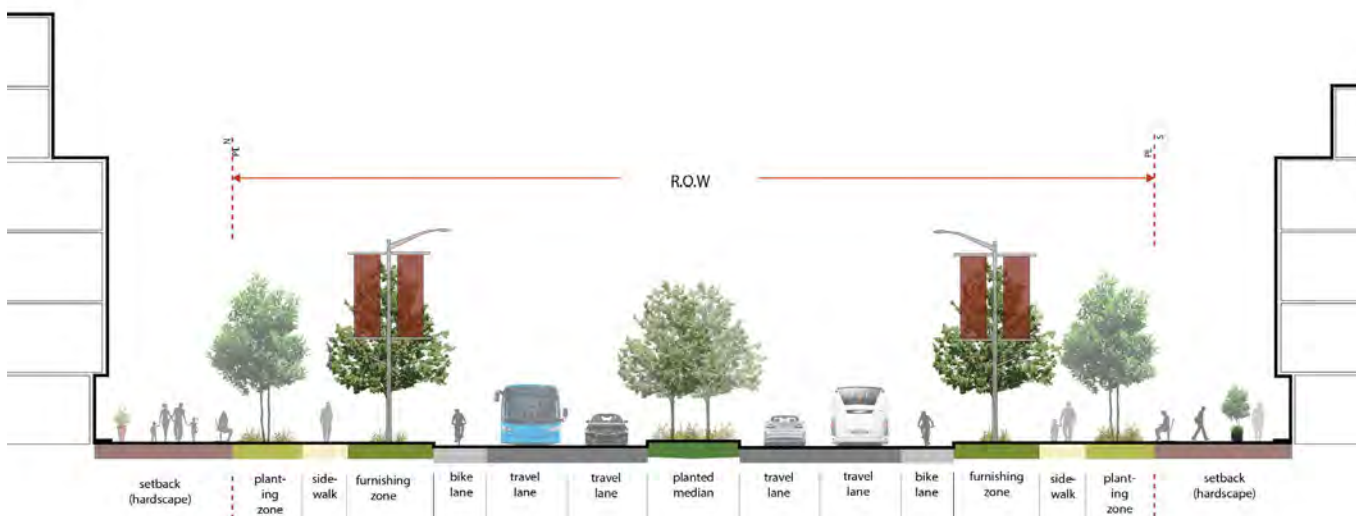
### 8th Street East

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Urban Main Street**.

**Land Uses:** Medium-density commercial, retail, office, and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars and heavy vehicles permitted on these streets. Priority treatments are given for pedestrians and bicyclists. These streets are found along BRT corridors, with dedicated bus lanes and transit stations.

**Multi-Modal Corridor:** The Active Transportation Plan identified 8th Street East as a Multi-Modal Corridor. The below image is a depiction of what a Multi-Modal Corridor could look like; however, this section of the street has not yet been designed and would require a larger, comprehensive plan to ensure Active Transportation facilities are appropriate and the design meets the needs of the overall transportation network.



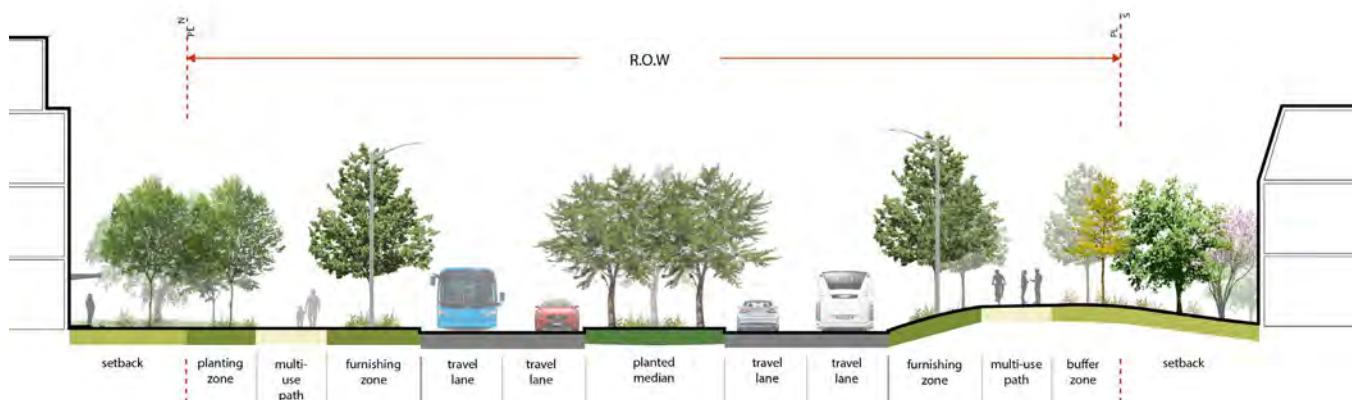
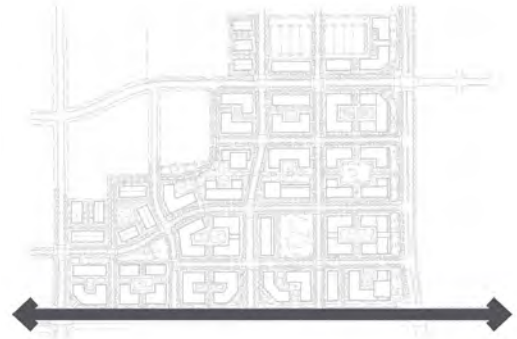
*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

### Attridge Drive

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Limited Access Arterial**

**Land Uses:** Retail, office, and residential

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, heavy vehicles, and buses Multi-use pathways or sidewalks and protected bicycle lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.



### 7.1.2.3 Secondary Circulation

#### Laurier Drive

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Suburban Centre Arterial**.

**Land Uses:** Surrounded by commercial, retail, and office with medium density residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, frequent or rapid transit with transit priority treatments. Dedicated pedestrian and bicycling facilities are required.



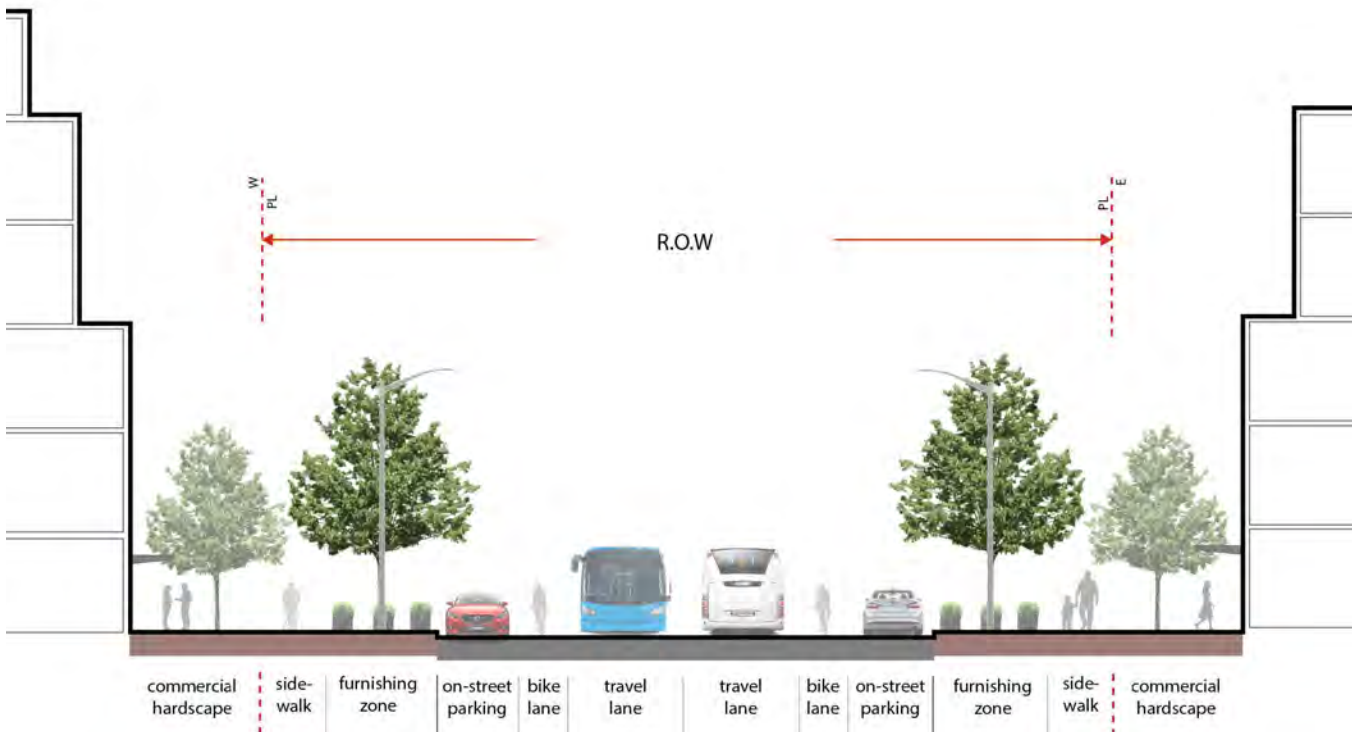
*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

### Heal Avenue

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Suburban Centre Arterial**.

**Land Uses:** Low density residential with some connection to commercial activity.

**Modes of Travel:** All modes with priority for pedestrians and bicyclists.



*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

**Nelson Road**

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Suburban Centre Arterial**.

**Land Uses:** Surrounded by commercial, retail, and office with medium density residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars, frequent or rapid transit with transit priority treatments. Dedicated pedestrian and bicycling facilities are required.



*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*



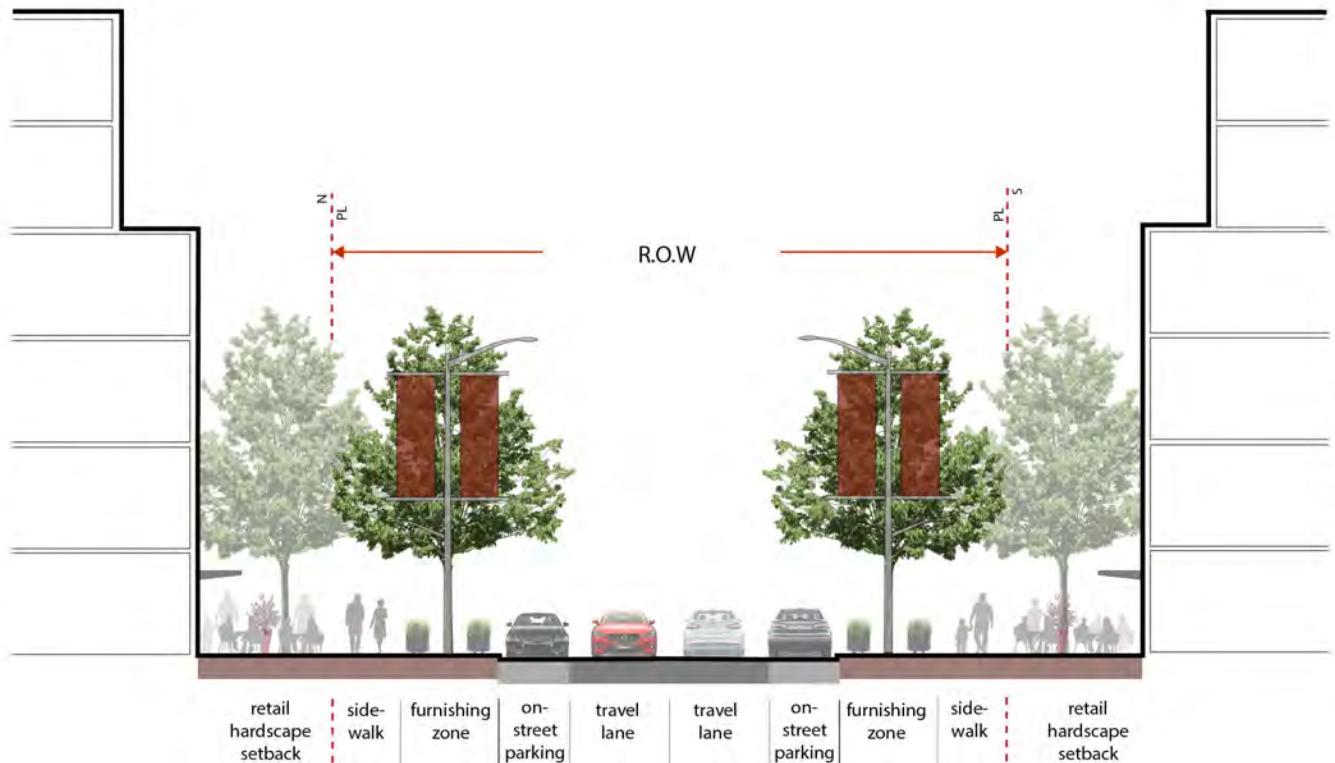
### 7.1.2.4 Main Streets

**Confederation and Centre Mall Main Streets.** These are special streets that serve as the nucleus of the Transit Villages.

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Local Street**, however in the Transit Villages they function more as the **Urban Main Street Typology** without dedicated bus lanes and stations.

**Land Uses:** Medium-density commercial, retail, office, and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars and heavy vehicles permitted on these streets. Priority treatments are given for pedestrians and bicyclists.



*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

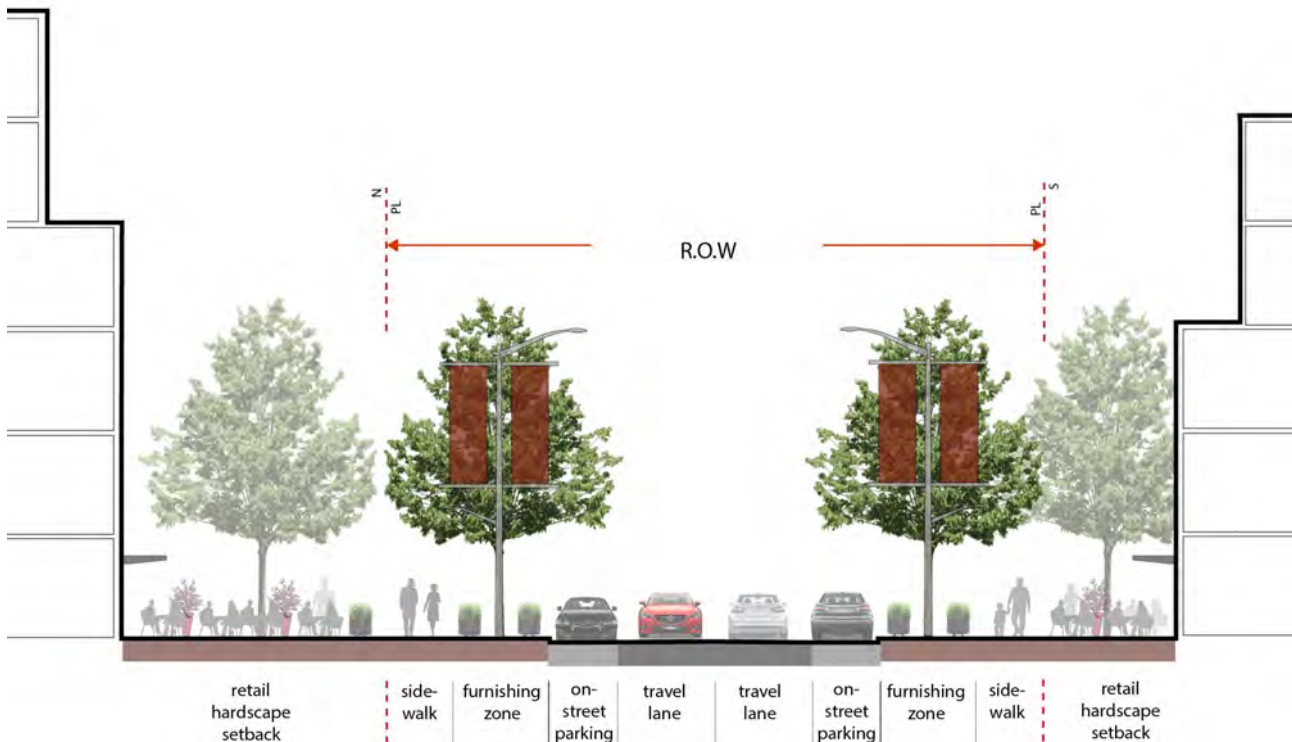
### University Heights Main Street

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Local Street**, however in the Transit Villages they function more as the **Urban Main Street Typology** without dedicated bus lanes and stations. The section below illustrates some design characteristics that makes the street unique from the Confederation and Centre Mall Main Streets, specifically that it has a greater building setback on its north side. This enlarged public realm space accommodates the urban plaza environment described in section 6.2 with more space for cafe spill out areas or restaurant patios, and seating areas.



**Land Uses:** Medium-density commercial, retail, office, and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars and heavy vehicles permitted on these streets. Priority treatments are given for pedestrians and bicyclists.



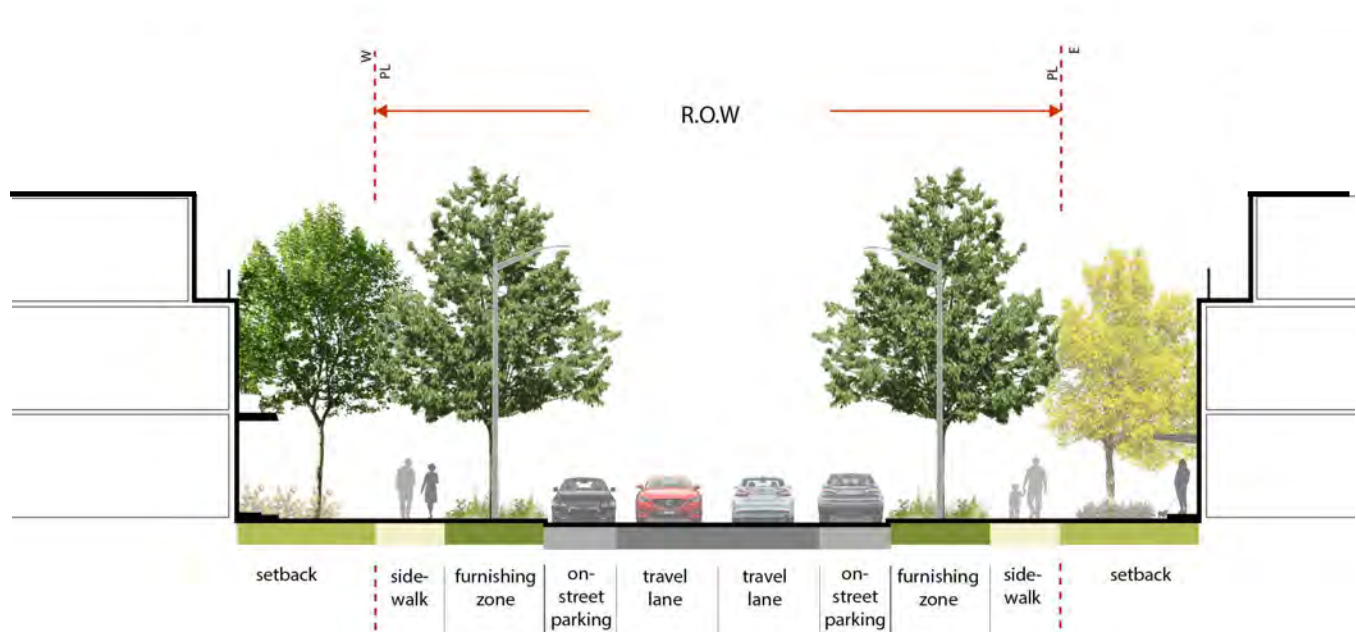
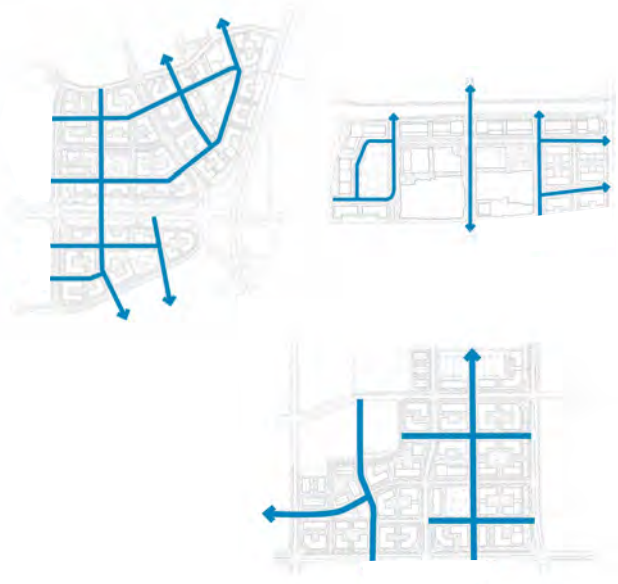
*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

### 7.1.2.5 Local Streets (20.0 m)

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Local Street**.

**Land Uses:** Single low, mid and high-rise density multi-family and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars with priority for pedestrians and bicyclists.



*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

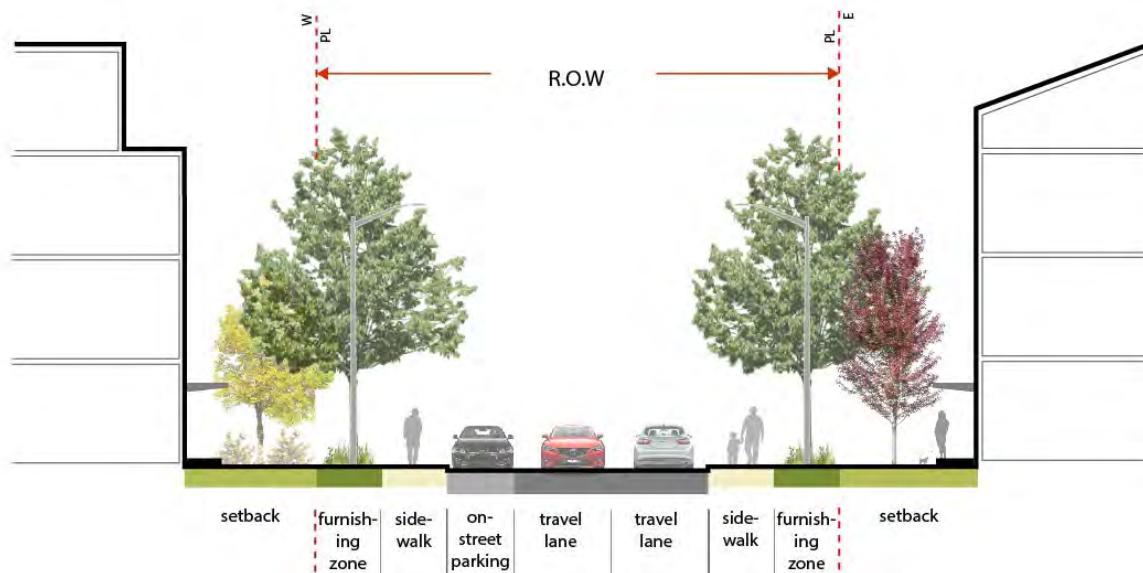


### 7.1.2.6 Local Streets (16.0 m)

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Local Street**.

**Land Uses:** Single low, mid and high-rise density multi-family and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars with priority for pedestrians and bicyclists.



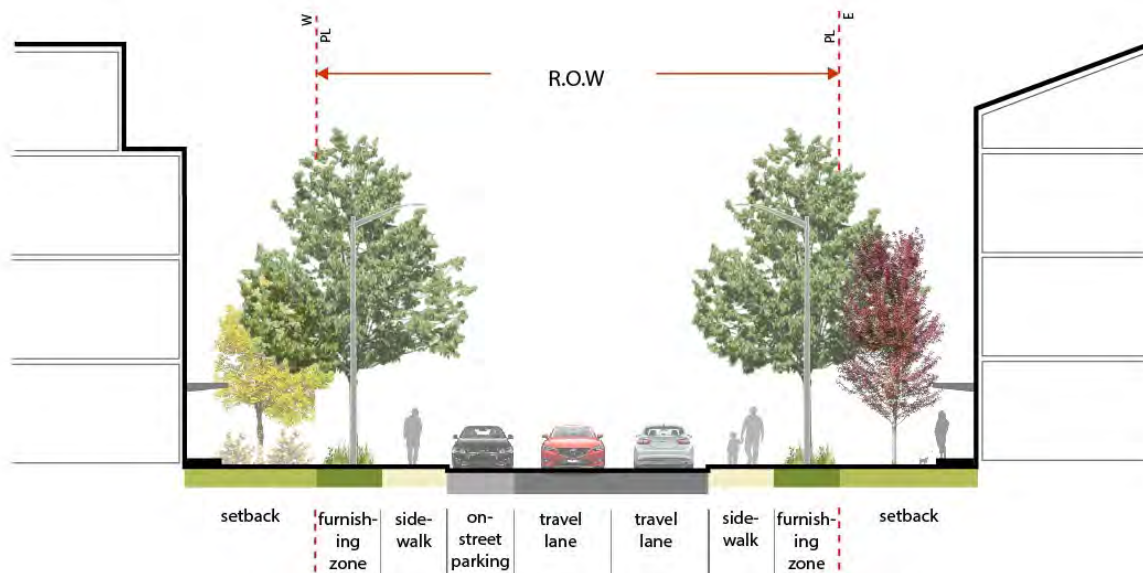
*Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.*

**University Heights Residential Street** (16.0 m ROW)

This road typology is defined by the City of Saskatoon, Complete Street Design and Policy Guide as a **Local Street**.

**Land Uses:** Single low, mid and high-rise density multi-family and residential.

**Modes of Travel:** Passenger cars with priority for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Street sections are included for illustrative purposes, detailed designs will be developed through implementing initiatives led by the City.

## 7.2 Active Transportation

All streets within Transit Villages should be designed to support active transportation modes, such as walking and cycling. The design of streets can accommodate specific facilities, such as extra-wide shared use paths, planted boulevards, street trees, and other features to create a safe and welcoming environment. Designing for universal accessibility should be a priority in all areas of the Transit Village. The City of Saskatoon's Active Transportation Plan was used to address Transit Village's community and infrastructure needs for cycling, walking and other modes of active transportation.

- **Landscaping:** Street and block design should include landscaping plans that integrate street trees, sidewalks on both sides of the street, and boulevards wherever possible.
- **Sidewalk and Multi-use Paths Widths:** Effort should be made to provide generous sidewalk and multi-use path widths, as appropriate given the provisions of the City's Active Transportation Plan. The following standards may be considered when creating new sidewalks: a minimum of 1.8m allows two pedestrians to pass in opposite directions; 2.0m allows a wheelchair user to pass a pedestrian coming the opposite way; 2.5m allows two wheelchair users to pass in opposite directions. 3.5m multi-use paths allows cyclists to pass in opposing directions and to pass pedestrians. Sidewalk cycling is prohibited except on multi-use path or designated shared pathways sidewalks and multi-use path should be separated in high-density areas.
- **Universal Accessibility:** Paths and sidewalks will be designed for universal accessibility, with signalized crossings at key intersections. Off-street multi-use paths, should be made visible and accessible to a variety of users.
- **Cycling Facilities:** Cycling facilities should be provided to facilitate connectivity and continuity of existing and future connections.



*Precedent: Bike parking shielded from elements beneath building awning*



*Precedent: Multi-use trail accommodating pedestrians and cyclists*



*Precedent: Extra wide sidewalks*



## 7.3 Transit and BRT

Access to public transit is at the heart of the Transit Villages purpose and appeal as places to live. The Plan is designed to maximize transit access through a multi-modal movement network and population density at the Transit Villages. All aspects of the movement network have been tailored to support a multi-modal environment and transit use. Transit Villages are designed for accessibility and to create a pedestrian-friendly environment—a special consideration for transit users.

- **Connectivity:** Plan and design sidewalks and paths to connect to and integrate with transit stops, allowing sufficient room for loading, unloading, and circulation. All transit stops should be integrated with the public realm to facilitate a safe and enjoyable experience for pedestrians and transit users. .
- **BRT Stations:** BRT stations in the Transit Villages may also include an enhanced public realm in their surrounding area that provides for protection from the elements and a sense of safety and security for transit users. BRT stations should be integrated with the landscaping and design approach along a given street.
- **Storage:** Additional bike parking should be provided in proximity to transit and BRT stations, in order to support integrated multi-modal movement, since some users may use a bicycle for a portion of their journey. Consider including sheltered bike lockers at key BRT stations.



*Precedent: Transit stop integrated with streetscaping and seating*



*Precedent: Providing additional bike parking nearby key transit stops*

## 7.4 Vehicles + Parking

Automobiles are accommodated in the overall movement network in the Transit Villages alongside other travel modes. Parking supply and demand should be tightly managed so as to provide an adequate and not excessive supply of parking. The current status quo of excessive parking supply should be redressed so that a surplus of surface parking spaces are not required for only the most extreme parking demands during the year. New development should accommodate their parking demand within a structured format (e.g. a below-grade parking level). Where parking structures are required they should be wrapped with other uses to mitigate their visual impact and sterilizing effect on the surrounding public realm.

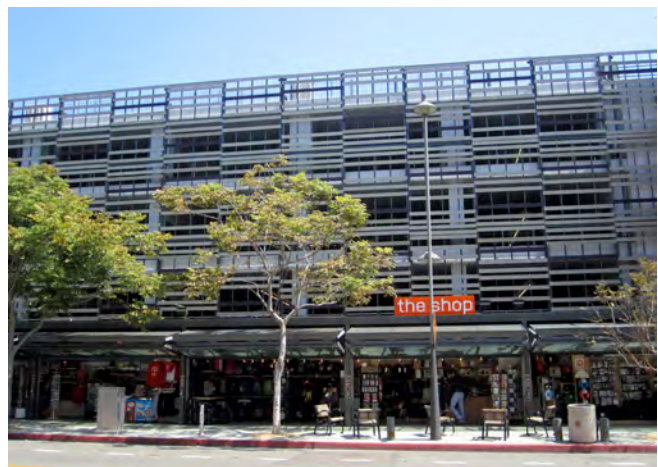
- **On-Street Parking:** On-street parking in Transit Villages is permitted along most Main Streets and Residential Streets, and some Primary Streets. On Main Streets, parking should be provided on both sides of the road. Parking should be located in areas that are close to accessible building entrances and provide universal access to people with physical disabilities. Detailed planning for streets and parking should also consider provisions for snow storage, where required.
- **Off-Street Parking:** The majority of vehicle parking should be located underneath buildings, especially in higher density areas. Where vehicle parking is provided at grade, it should be located behind buildings, and shielded from the public realm.
- **Structured Parking:** In some cases parking structure may be integrated with a development for a site, to allow for additional spaces above grade. These structures should be wrapped with active uses along their perimeter, such as residential or retail.
- **Bicycle Parking:** All public streets should include bicycle parking that is easily accessible via paved surfaces and oriented to allow maximum utilization. The typical length of an on-street parking stall should accommodate 10 or more parking stalls. Bike parking around transit stops is recommended and should be taken into consideration for the design of BRT stations.



*Precedent: On street parking with curb extension*



*Precedent: Pocket parking lot screened from the street*



*Precedent: Structured parking facility with screening and active uses at grade*





# 8

## PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing this Plan will require many actions on the part of the City, private landowners, businesses, and others, and supported by a variety of planning tools and strategies. This section describes tools and strategies that are to be used by the City, in addition to those available in the Official Community Plan and Plan for Growth. Ultimately, implementing the Plan will be an ongoing and collaborative process with private landowners, businesses and community members.

This section provides guidance on:

- Interpretation and Administration
- Preliminary Implementation Strategy
- Phasing Strategy
- Ongoing Engagement

## 8.1 Interpretation and Administration

### 8.1.1 A Living Document

The Plan is a living document and it is anticipated that it will evolve as the City creates the policy and zoning tools to aid in its implementation. As a living document, the Plan should be reviewed and updated periodically so that it aligns with the City's strategic thinking. Although it is anticipated that the City may enact additional policy or zoning to aid in its implementation, the Plan is not dependent on these. It is designed to be utilized as a decision-making framework by the City, private landowners, and the public immediately after it is adopted.

While it is expected that some aspects of the Transit Village's planning will evolve over time, such as the configuration of specific blocks, the design of buildings, or open spaces, all planning and design decisions should align with the Vision, Planning Principles, and guidelines of this document. As the Plan is implemented, the City and private landowners should continue to engage the community and stakeholders to help shape detailed planning initiatives and projects.

### 8.1.2 Administering the Plan

City Council, as the primary decision-making authority, will continue to play a role in key decisions concerning the Transit Villages. To assist Council, administration should delegate responsibility for implementation to one or more staff members. This person, or persons, would be responsible for developing the policy tools or zoning to aid in implementing the Plan, and engaging landowners in this process. As proposals for redevelopment or improvement are brought forward, the responsible staff member(s) can work with development review staff to comment on and align proposals with the Plan. This delegation of responsibility is not intended to supersede Council's role in administering oversight of the Plan, but rather to aid in furthering the goal of creating the implementing policy framework.

If sufficient redevelopment pressure builds at one of the Transit Villages, it may benefit the City to formalize the involvement of landowners, business owners, and community members through a working group. Their responsibilities would include providing comment on City-initiated proposals and public realm improvements, to align these works with the interests of local stakeholders.

### 8.1.3 Design Review

To assist in the review of development applications and proposals, the City may wish to establish a design review committee, composed of professionals with expertise in urban design, planning, architecture, recreational planning, landscape architecture, and engineering, to assist in the review of significant development proposals. That committee will be guided by this Plan in formulating their opinions during the review process.

### 8.1.4 Monitoring the Plan

The Plan should be reviewed approximately every 5 years as a way of monitoring its implementation. This work should be led by the staff member, or members, charged with implementing the Plan, and overseen by City Council.

## 8.2 Implementation Recommendations

To a significant extent, the timing of development at the Transit Villages will be driven by the market and private interests. Market dynamics related to housing demand, construction costs, and land values, will continue to play a role in how Transit villages change and evolve. The goal of this preliminary strategy is to create an incentive for redevelopment through policy changes and changes in the City's approach to development.

As one of the largest landowners and developers in the Saskatoon, the City controls a significant proportion of developable land and housing supply through its development corporation, Saskatoon Land. Most of this land is undeveloped greenfields at the perimeter of the City, which in the past would be developed as a predominantly low-density neighbourhood of single family homes. The City is in a unique position to control the development of further greenfield sites, in order to encourage more infill development, such as at the Transit Villages and along the city's major streets or corridors. It is critically important for the Transit villages, and the sustainability of Saskatoon as a whole, that the City hold true to the commitments and direction in the Plan for Growth.

Aside from controlling the supply of inexpensive greenfield development sites, the City must also take steps to encourage infill development at the Transit Villages. This can be done by following the recommendations of this Plan, allowing for mixed-use development at development densities outlined in section 5.3. It follows as well that in implementing the Plan, the City should focus its efforts toward the urban Transit Villages, while continuing to work with Saskatoon Land and Dream Development to refine the concepts for Blairmore and Holmwood.

It is anticipated that this preliminary strategy will be further developed by the City at the appropriate stage to address detailed matters related to public infrastructure, public realm improvements, streetscaping and BRT-related improvements, and other components that may require City investment to implement.

### 8.2.1 Implementation Tools

To assist in implementing the Plan there are several tools available to the City that should be further explored. These tools will assist the City in working with the private sector and setting the stage for a successful roll out of development.

- **Official Plan Amendment:** The City should amend its OCP and accompanying land-use plan (Bylaw 8769) to create a consistent designation for the urban Transit Villages that is in keeping with the Plan. Specifically, the designation should allow for vertically integrated mixed-use development in compact building forms. This designation may include content from the Plan, such as the Vision, Planning Principles, and key guidelines. In addition, it should also make reference to this document and its role in providing detailed guidance for development.
- **Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** In keeping with the new land use designation in the OCP, the City should develop an appropriate zoning category for the Transit Villages and enact it for the urban Transit Villages sites. At a future date, once Blairmore and Holmwood are considered appropriate for development, they can also be designated under the new category.
- **Form-based Zoning:** This Plan takes an approach that aligns well with a form-based zoning code. A form-based zoning code could assist in translating the direction of this plan into zoning regulations, while allowing the City flexibility to refine development proposals, in collaboration with landowners, on a case-by-case basis. The City should evaluate whether this is an appropriate tool to pursue at this time, and if it may also be applied to other infill contexts, such as the corridors.



- **Direct Control Districts:** One tool available to the City under the Planning and Development Act is creating a Direct Control District through the zoning by-law. Although a DCD provides clarity to developers and can ease in implementation for as-of-right projects, it is cumbersome to amend for projects that do not precisely follow its requirements. Given that the Transit Villages are owned by multiple landowners, with varying interests and objectives, and that implementation will often require coordination between more than one landowner, it is advised that the City retain maximum flexibility to work with them and the community on the development and detailed design of the Transit Villages. Therefore, it is anticipated that Direct Control Districts are not an appropriate implementing tool where there are multiple landowners and more flexibility is needed. They may be appropriate in instances where there has been significant consolidation of ownership.
- **Easements:** As redevelopment projects come forward, the City may consider requiring easements for new public right-of ways along portions of property to align with the recommended street grid and block pattern in this Plan. This can be structured to allow for the incremental implementation of the Plan.
- **Public Realm and Infrastructure Investments:** The City can help set the tone and focus areas for redevelopment by encouraging and echoing private initiatives with public realm and infrastructure projects. One such initiative is the construction of the BRT which should function as a catalyst for transit-oriented development.
- Continue to engage the public and private landowners in the planning of the Transit Villages, and other infill sites across the City, such as along the corridors;
- Consider undertaking an awareness raising strategy with landowners at the Transit Villages (particularly those who did not participate in prior meetings) to inform them of the Plan, the development opportunities it presents, and next steps moving forward;
- Develop a detailed implementation strategy that considers the timing and use of public investments in the public realm, site servicing, and the BRT to help kick start development;
- Consider if there is a role for Saskatchewan Land to play in piloting infill or redevelopment sites, to kick start development at the Transit Villages; and
- Consider undertaking detailed topographical surveys of the three urban Transit Villages to facilitate detailed site planning and coordination between.

### Medium to Long-term Actions

- The City should:
  - Establish Plan Implementation Working Groups for the Transit Villages once some redevelopment has occurred and there is an emerging critical mass. The membership of this group should comprise local residents, landowners, and business owners;
  - Evaluate the status of redevelopment proposals that have been brought forward by landowners and determine if there are further actions to be taken to encourage development, such as financial incentives.
- Review and update the Transit Villages Plan.

## 8.2.2 Action Items and Initiatives

### Short-term Actions

- The City should:
  - Determine the level of regulations that should be implemented to support the Transit Villages, striking an appropriate balance between retaining flexibility to respond to development proposals and a desire to give clear direction to the market and development community;
  - Undertake the appropriate policy and zoning amendments to formalize the status of the Transit Villages;

## 8.3 Phasing Strategy

Given that the Transit Villages are privately held lands, the City cannot control the phasing or timing of particular developments, however, in working with landowners it can influence phasing and take steps to protect for an orderly and cohesive development.

Another key principle of the phasing strategy is trying to cluster private development initiatives and public improvements together, in order to build momentum, and a sense of completion through each phase of development. This will help realize synergies between development phases and land uses. The following diagrams and guidelines propose a concentrated and focused approach to initiating the evolution of the Transit Villages.

### Overall Guidelines

- The Plan is designed to follow existing property lines wherever feasible. In some cases, property consolidation may need to occur prior to a block developing, in others the City may be able to work with property owners to phase developments of blocks incrementally.
- In general, surface parking lots are straight-forward redevelopment sites that can be targeted in early development phases.
- Implementation of the recommendations below must align with the Plan's guidelines and Vision.
- Investing in the public realm and creating spaces for activity and public gathering have proven successful catalysts for development. Early development initiatives and public realm investments should include a public realm investment as a component.
- In general, the early phases are designed to align with higher density development opportunities.
- The City should work with any landowner wishing to redevelop, regardless of what phase their property is associated with.

### Confederation Transit Village

Phase 1 initiatives:

- Improve the streetscape and public realm along Confederation Drive, in coordination with the BRT.
- Create a green buffer and activity corridor along 22nd Street West that connects with the regional trail system.
- Encourage redevelopment of surface parking lots and under-utilized sites to create a Main Street and new nucleus of animation and vibrancy at the centre of the Transit Village.
- Build the West Park.

### Centre Mall Transit Village

Phase 1 initiatives:

- Streetscape improvements along 8th Street East to make it a more pedestrian-friendly and welcoming environment. This will support use of the BRT and present a welcoming face to the Transit Village.
- Streetscape improvements along adjacent and adjoining streets.
- Encourage development along the Transit Village's edge, adjacent to 8th Street East, where there are currently surface parking lots.
- Build the Main Street by creating a high-quality streetscape as blocks redevelop, and providing fine-grain commercial frontages accordingly.
- Improvements to the mall structure to define the south edge of the Main Street, creating street-facing commercial units.
- Create the East Plaza adjacent to the Main Street.

### University Heights Transit Village

Phase 1 initiatives:

- Focus development around the Main Street and higher density areas.
- Develop the Main Street with a high-quality streetscape and street-facing commercial frontages.
- Build the East Park.



Fig. 24: Confederation Transit Village phasing plan

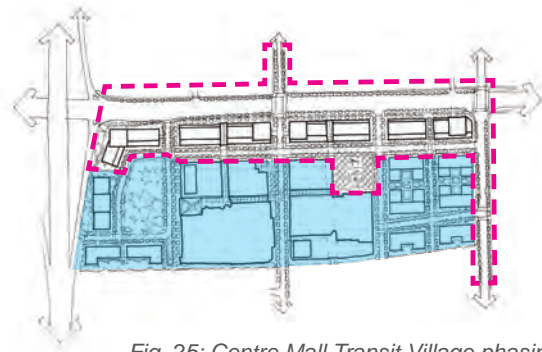


Fig. 25: Centre Mall Transit Village phasing plan

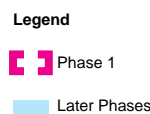


Fig. 26: University Heights Transit Village phasing plan



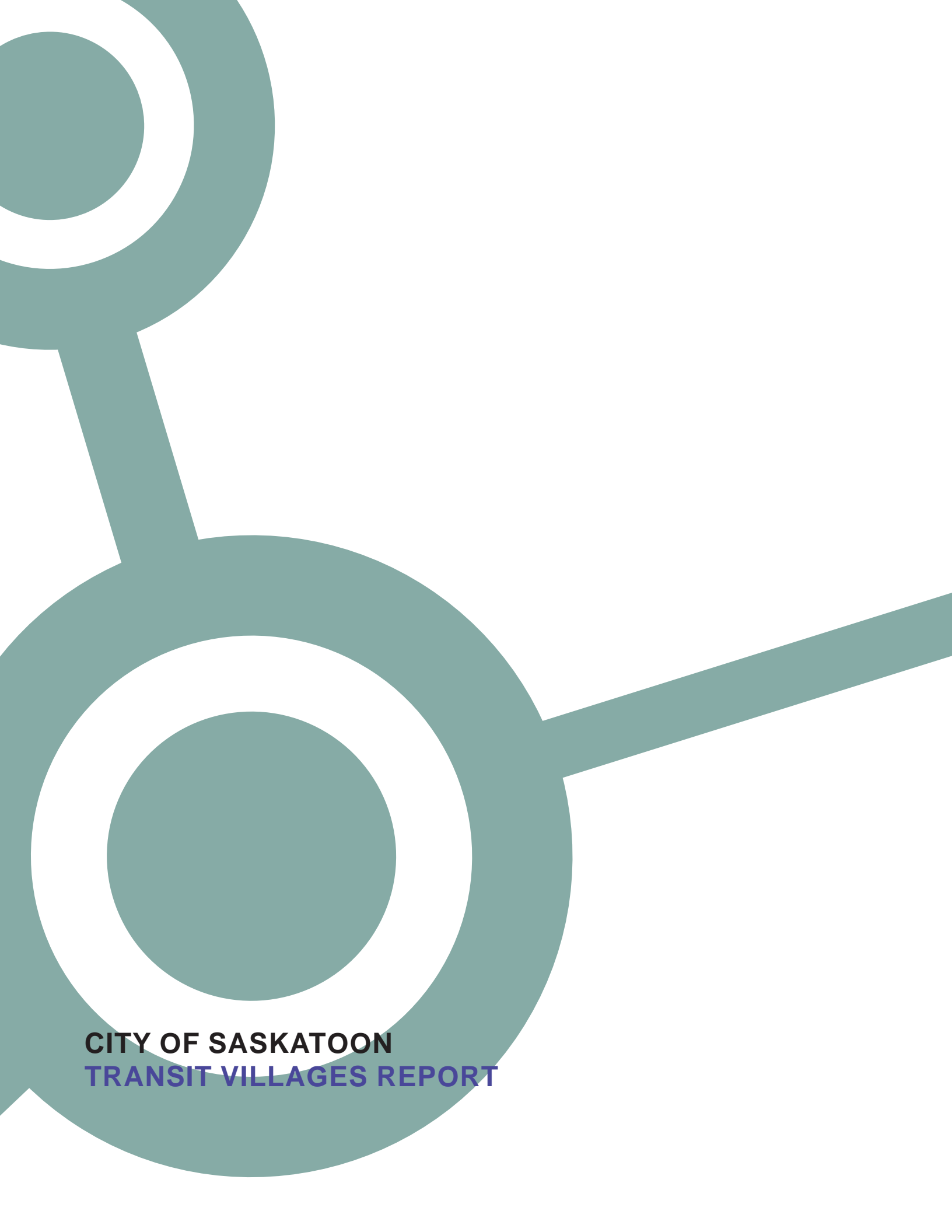
## 8.4 Ongoing Engagement

In implementing the Plan, there will be a need for ongoing engagement with landowners, the public, and other stakeholders, in order to further the conversation and continue to align interests and objectives around the Plan. Beyond statutory engagement requirements for amending the Official Community Plan or Zoning By-law, is critical that the City continue promoting the Transit Village by engaging landowners. An awareness raising strategy built around the next steps for implementing the Transit Villages provides a logical way of continuing to engage the development community.









**CITY OF SASKATOON**  
**TRANSIT VILLAGES REPORT**