

Proposed Content of Section A – Introduction

This section is intended to provide an introduction to the Official Community Plan (OCP) and its use. The section is proposed to include the six subsections:

1. What is Saskatoon’s Official Community Plan?
2. Legislative Context
3. Relationships to Other Plans
4. Strategic Alignment
5. Scope and Horizon
6. How to Read this Plan

Details on each subsection and the source of its content is included below.

A1 – What is Saskatoon Official Community Plan?

This section provides context regarding the OCP and explains that:

- The OCP is a bylaw that provides a comprehensive policy framework for achieving the community Saskatoon residents collectively envision and desire;
- The OCP guides the physical, environmental, economic, social and cultural development of the city through a broad set of goals, objectives and policies;
- The goals, objectives and policies of the OCP inform all planning, decision-making and priority-setting for the City of Saskatoon; and
- The direction and goals, as outlined in the OCP, are entrenched in law and recognized by the Province of Saskatchewan as a statement of Saskatoon’s long term vision.

This is an update to Section 1.2 of the current OCP, which reads as follows:

“This Plan has been established in accordance with the provisions of The Planning and Development Act, 2007, as amended. The Plan provides the policy framework to define, direct, and evaluate development in the City of Saskatoon, ensuring that development takes place in an orderly and rational manner, balancing the environmental, social, and economic needs of the community.”

A2 – Legislative Context

This section provides additional information on the legislative context that allows for the establishment of the OCP. It explains that:

- The OCP has been established in accordance with *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* (as amended), which provides a basis for orderly development in municipalities; and

- *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations* provide additional policy direction to guide provincial and municipal planning decisions as well as the development of sustainable communities.

The Planning and Development Act, 2007 (as amended) is a provincial act of legislature respecting Planning and Development in Municipalities. It can be viewed [here](#). Part IV, Division 1 provides details on the preparation and adoption of an official community plan, including requirements for what an official community plan must incorporate.

The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations are a set of regulations adopted by the Province through the *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* as way to link provincial and municipal objectives for land use planning. They help guide the development of economically, environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable communities.

A3 – Relationships to Other Plans

This section provides an overview of the documents that informed this Official Community Plan Redesign process and subsequently what the OCP facilitates. The list of documents that informed this document includes a number of documents listed in Appendix 1 - Official Community Plan Redesign - Guiding Documents. This is intended as means to show how an OCP can evolve through the adoption of new initiatives and then how it facilitates other management documents such as the following:

- Zoning Bylaw;
- Sector Plans;
- Concept Plans;
- Local Area Plans;
- Corridor Plans;
- Saskatoon Transportation Strategy;
- Development Servicing Agreements;
- Municipal Servicing Standards;
- Urban Design Standards; and
- Transit Service Standards.

This is intended to be an informational section to provide context on where the directions contained in the OCP originated and what regulations and plans the OCP facilitates.

A4 – Strategic Alignment

This section provides clarity on how the OCP works with the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Business Plan and Budgeting process to create a strategic framework for how priorities are set and how the City achieves its goals.

The OCP sets out a long term vision, while the Strategic Plan sets up the short term (four year) priorities for achieving that vision. The Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process operationalizes and provides the necessary funding for these priorities.

This aligns with the recently approved Council Policy C03-036 - *Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget Policy*, which can be found [here](#).

A5 – Scope and Horizon

This section provides an overview of the development horizon that the OCP is intended to guide Saskatoon's growth and development to, as well as how that growth and development is monitored. It is consistent with Section 1.3 of the current OCP, which reads:

“This Plan is intended to guide the growth and development of the City of Saskatoon to a population of approximately 500,000.”

The population horizon of a population of 500,000 is proposed to be maintained. This is consistent with the Growth Plan to Half a Million, which has guided many of the updates to the OCP.

This section also provides an update to Section 18.7 of the current OCP, which reads:

“18.7 Plan Evaluation Procedures

a) Council shall review the Official Community Plan at regular intervals of not more than five years. During the review process, Council shall ensure that:

- i) the Plan's objectives and policies remain valid in view of possible changes in terms of population, employment, development patterns, and market trends;*
- ii) the Plan's objectives and policies are adequate for the implementation of the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan;*
- iii) the Plan's objectives and policies are measured against a comprehensive set of indicators that track the year to year changes in Saskatoon's quality of life; and*
- iv) the Plan's public consultation processes are adequate to provide an effective voice to the public and provide necessary information to the civic Administration and Council in the decision making process.”*

This is proposed to be updated to align with the timing and framework laid out through the Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget processes. To achieve this, it is proposed that an assessment of the Plan shall occur every four years. This assessment would be summarized in a report to Council that includes:

- A summary of progress towards the City's long term vision; and

- Identification of amendments, mechanisms or approaches to continuously improve the Plan, including a recommendation on whether to schedule a comprehensive review.

The assessment report would be completed so as to inform updates to the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan.

Additionally, to provide a regular monitoring of growth towards a population of 500,000, this section outlines that growth would be monitored through the annual Growth Monitoring Report. The report, formerly known as the Three Year Land Development Report, provides information on residential, commercial and industrial development in Saskatoon, as well as a number of other growth-related indicators for the city. The 2019 Growth Monitoring Report can be found [here](#).

Providing this annual monitoring of growth metrics through the Growth Monitoring Report, alongside the assessment of the OCP every four years helps ensure there are regularly scheduled reports that help Council and Administration in assessing how Saskatoon is progressing towards the identified growth horizon. It also provides a regular opportunity to identify if policy or process improvements are required to help achieve the vision laid out in the OCP; or if this vision in the OCP may need to be updated as a whole.

A6 – How to Read this Plan

This section updates the preamble contained ahead of the Table of Contents of the current OCP, which reads:

“The headings in the left-hand margin are intended to assist the reader by highlighting the corresponding policy statement, and are not to be interpreted as policy statements themselves.

In order to gain a complete understanding of the Official Community Plan, it is recommended that the reader review the entire document.”

The proposed OCP no longer includes the headings in the left-hand margin and instead each section contains an introduction and major headings. When read alongside Section A – Introduction, Section B – Our Local Context and Section C – Civic Vision, these provide a general overview of Saskatoon's vision and how it is expected to be achieved.

The intent of this is to provide a more general overview to make the OCP more readable and engaging. The inclusion of the narrative sections would allow a person to read these narrative sections and get a general overview of the vision for the city without having to read individual policy statements. Then, if they need or desire more details about how the City is attempting to achieve that vision, a person can read the relevant policy.

This section also clarifies that background information, introductions and other explanatory text or photographs are not intended to be interpreted as policy.