

Catalyst Projects Background

SaskTel Centre/TCU Place

At its November 19, 2018 Regular Business Meeting, City Council considered the report entitled "[TCU Place / SaskTel Centre Market Analysis](#)." Attached to this was a report from the Administration entitled "[Financing Options – New or Renovated Arena and Convention Centre](#)," which outlined several financing options that may support the funding strategy for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District. In considering this item, City Council resolved:

- "1. That the Administration be directed to include a future Arena/convention centre when planning the future of Saskatoon's Downtown;
2. That the focus of the planning work include consideration of an entertainment district, not just an arena and/or convention facility;
3. That the Administration report back on terms of reference for a process for identifying the best location for a future entertainment district and how it would fit into a wider vision for a strong downtown for the future;
4. That one of the overall principles be to seek approaches that minimize the reliance on Property taxes to pay for this arena; and
5. That the approach also recognize that while the City of Saskatoon has a leadership role, it will take collaboration with stakeholders and the community as a whole to come up with the best solution."

At its April 29, 2019 Regular Business Meeting, City Council considered the report entitled "[Downtown Event and Entertainment District – Next Steps](#)," which outlined the proposed process with respect to planning for a future Downtown event and entertainment district.

At its meeting held on January 27, 2020, the Governance and Priorities Committee received a report entitled "[Downtown Event and Entertainment District – Update](#)," which provided an update regarding the site selection process.

Bus Rapid Transit

At its meeting on April 25, 2016, City Council approved [The Growth Plan to Half a Million \(Growth Plan\)](#). The plan charts a course for long-term growth and revitalization that balances and promotes quality of life, sustainability, and economic development.

A key element of the Growth Plan is rethinking the way in which the City of Saskatoon (City) provides transportation options to existing and future residents. As Saskatoon grows to 500,000 people, it will require a variety of transportation options to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the city. Given this objective, the Growth Plan includes a specific Transit Plan that aims to redefine public transit in Saskatoon. The proposed Transit Plan focuses primarily on building a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, and identifies changes needed to the current system to support high-frequency, direct service along the major corridors.

The BRT system is intended to form the backbone of the future transit system and is seen to be a catalyst for the corridor growth component of the Growth Plan. In order to have a successful BRT system, Saskatoon needs to reconfigure its transit system to support the BRT lines, and this means fundamental changes in how the transit system operates.

On November 20, 2017, City Council received a report entitled "[Plan for Growth – Bus Rapid Transit Preferred Configuration](#)" and approved a "preferred configuration and conceptual network" for the BRT system. The preferred configuration included "runningways" or dedicated lanes along select short road sections.

At its meeting held on June 20, 2018, the Governance and Priorities Committee considered several reports from the Administration leading out of the [Plan for Growth Summit](#), and the committee entertained public comment on the proposed BRT configuration. During that meeting, several questions were asked, and the Administration committed to responding to the technical questions and conducting further stakeholder and public engagement prior to bringing a decision report forward to confirm the BRT and Downtown Active Transportation Networks.

During its October 15, 2018 meeting, the Governance and Priorities Committee received a report entitled "[Transit Plan and Downtown All Ages and Abilities Cycling Network Update – Response to Plan for Growth Summit](#)," which provided responses to the majority of technical questions raised at the Plan for Growth Summit in June 2018, and a summary of the stakeholder/community engagement activities completed to date to support the Transit Plan/BRT Plan and the Downtown Active Transportation Network.

During its [April 29, 2019 meeting](#), City Council received three reports related to the BRT system and endorsed the proposed network and location of 38 km of BRT, which consists of 35.3 km running in mixed traffic and 2.7 km in dedicated transit-only lanes on 1st Avenue through Downtown and on College Drive, six bus-only queue jump locations along with 38 km of fibre optic communication cable, 14 upgraded traffic signal controllers, and transit signal priority at 90 intersections.