

Urban Design Bubbling Over

Project Definition

Bubbling Over is intended to help improve perceptions of the Downtown and is part of a larger plan to improve higher density and pedestrian areas to promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles and community building.

Scope and Budget

Item	Scope.	Budget
Programable Lighting Installation	Four installations in a Downtown back alley.	\$116,092

“Bubbling Over” is a programable lighting installation in a back alley in the heart of Saskatoon’s Downtown that will provide visual interest at all times of day and in all seasons, particularly during our dark winter months. The design responds to the character of its location, which is surrounded by restaurants, concert venues, pubs, and innovative workplaces. See the attached drawings and budget for further details.

Evaluation Criteria Alignment

This project demonstrates alignment with the funding application as follows:

Project Rationale

COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted our City Centre and the sense of community that comes from all citizens sharing iconic spaces in our cities. Small businesses and cultural and entertainment focused organizations have been especially hard hit. This project is intended to meet the need to reinvigorate our City Centre and remind people that we are all one community. It is designed to bring back a sense of joy and playfulness during and after this period of anxiety and hardship. The installation will also bring visitors to a mural created by Indigenous artists through the Saskatoon Community Youth Arts Program (SCYAP) already present in the alley, making this a space to celebrate Saskatoon’s Indigenous peoples as a foundation of our community.

- Partners – Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District (BID), Adjacent Businesses, and SCYAP.

Community Engagement

This project evolved out of a significant community consultation process titled “Downtown Where You Belong” where community members identified transforming back alleys as a priority. For this specific project, the businesses involved and the BID came together to provide guidance and support to Urban Design on what they felt would revitalize their area. They have also committed to investing in the installation and electrification of the piece as well as collaborating with the City of Saskatoon (City) to maintain and program the piece. The team also worked with SCYAP for input on the mural project that is also located in the alley. “Bubbling Over” will help highlight a mural celebrating Saskatoon’s Indigenous community.

Outcomes

- This project addresses the Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces theme.

The programmable lighting technology in the design allows the installation to be programmed to keep it interesting and attractive over a long period of time. It is part of a long-term collaboration between the City, small businesses, and the BID to build and operate the installation and develop this alley as a space for safe, outdoor events and celebrations during and after COVID-19. It is intended to help improve perceptions of the Downtown and is part of a larger plan to improve higher density and pedestrian areas to promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles and community building. This installation will attract people from throughout Saskatoon and beyond back to the Downtown and will provide joy and fun that is accessible to all citizens with no price of admission.

Project Implementation and Readiness

Bubbling Over has been designed to repurpose standard manufactured fibreglass orbs normally used in Christmas lighting displays into a year-round innovative design that sprinkles light and magic through a neglected urban space. Design development is already complete, and the Administration has retained local engineers to finalize the designs and produce tender-ready electrical and structural drawings. The Administration is planning to tender the manufacturing of the installation as soon as there is confirmation that funding is in place, and have estimated that a period of three to four months will be required for the materials to be procured and assembled. The City's Urban Design Group is already working with the Procurement team to ensure a fair tender process for this unique project and MOUs have been signed with the businesses committing them to managing and covering the costs of the installation and electrification. The goal is for the installation to be operational for a minimum of five years. The BID will be a partner for the duration of the installation and will be managing the social media presence of the project and collecting feedback and stories from the community on the impact of this project.