

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION



2020

Community Standards

YEAR-END REPORT



City of  
Saskatoon

# WELCOME

Welcome to the 2020 Annual Report of the Community Standards Department, which highlights some of the important initiatives and accomplishments from the past year and provides a look ahead to 2021.

The Community Standards Department was established in 2014 and is committed to supporting a safe and vibrant community by ensuring that reasonable community standards are maintained. With a focus on information and education, we have developed strategies to better assist the community when it comes to matters related to bylaw enforcement, business and taxi licensing, and parking services. While the Community Standards Department manages a diverse portfolio of work, our commitment to provide a high level of customer service to residents and the business community continues to drive our decisions and priorities.

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented challenge and created uncertainty for many, the Community Standards Department thrived in this time of change and adaptation. This time of transition was an opportunity to ensure that regulations and bylaws were relevant, addressed current conditions and met the community's changing needs. Some of the 2020 changes included:

- Virtual in-home inspections were conducted to protect staff and the public;
- Enforcement practices were sensitive to personal situations and a special focus was placed on public education;
- Various parking programs, pay parking requirements, and enforcement practices were paused and modified;
- Renewal notices for business licenses were suspended from April 2020 to June 2020;
- Conventional parking patios were permitted to operate all year; and
- An amendment to the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw was adopted to allow operators of temporary taxi licenses to suspend operations during the pandemic without forfeiting their license.

The Community Standards Department is comprised of 38 staff, plus additional contract staff. Throughout 2020, solutions were implemented to allow staff to provide services remotely, where possible, and embrace new ways to provide effective customer service.

## 2020 BY THE NUMBERS

**12,073** total business licensed

**\$3.8 million** in parking program revenues

**4,707** investigations related to bylaw enforcement

**588** sign permits and portable sign licenses

**6,500** parking permits issued

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- ▶ Undertook 4,707 investigations related to the administration and enforcement of bylaws
- ▶ Issued 549 portable sign licenses and 39 sign permits
- ▶ Released the online versions of the Good Neighbour Guide and Residential Lot Grading Guidelines
- ▶ Completed 461 development permit inspections to confirm that required site landscaping and off-street parking was established per the approved development permit
- ▶ Licensed 1,076 new businesses, reaching a record total of 12,073 businesses in the City
- ▶ Licensed 221 taxis, four brokerages, and one transport network company
- ▶ Licensed eight parking patios and 11 sidewalk cafes
- ▶ Adopted updated regulations for short-term accommodations
- ▶ Processed nearly 23,000 parking customer service enquiries
- ▶ Processed a total of 6,500 parking permits under several programs
- ▶ Attained payment for over 3,500 long overdue parking tickets through the Chronic Offender Parking Enforcement Program
- ▶ Delivered 3,500 legal documents



# BYLAW COMPLIANCE

The Bylaw Compliance Section is a focal point for customers seeking assistance on bylaw or regulatory compliance. The section provides an effective bylaw delivery model through education and enforcement of several civic bylaws including the following:

1. The Traffic Bylaw (No. 7200)
2. The Temporary Sign Bylaw (No. 7491)
3. The Poster Bylaw (No. 7565)
4. The Drainage Bylaw (No. 8379)
5. The Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw (No. 8463)
6. The Zoning Bylaw (No. 8770)
7. The Sewer Use Bylaw (No. 9466)

In addition to enforcing and providing education on the above-noted bylaws, we review all sign permit applications for compliance with the Zoning Bylaw, review sewer use permits for compliance with the Sewer Use Bylaw and inspect development sites to ensure off-street parking and site landscaping is completed, in accordance with Zoning Bylaw requirements.

## 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Customer Service Delivery during COVID-19

The Bylaw Compliance Section remained operational and transitioned to a work from home program in March 2020. Field inspections continued, though inspection methods evolved throughout the year, as conditions surrounding COVID-19 health and safety practices changed. As staff adapted to the changes necessitated by the pandemic, the intake of bylaw related enquiries and complaints steadily increased and resulted in a record high number of phone calls, emails and web form complaint submissions. Bylaw Compliance staff responded to 5,981 enquiries related to general bylaw questions and concerns. In 2019 there were 2,899 enquiries. In comparing 2020 to 2019 data, there was an increase of 92% in emails and web form submissions and phone calls increased by 147%. The annual totals from all bylaw related enquiries are identified in Figure 1. Even with the significant increase in volumes of enquires, staff were able to provide an initial

response to members of the public within one business day, with the information they were seeking or advising a complaint file would be initiated. It is noted some enquiries simply relate to general questions on bylaw matters and not all enquiries lead to the initiation of a formal complaint file or an inspection by a Bylaw Inspector.

The Bylaw Compliance Section adapted specific inspection processes to keep staff and the public safe. Inspections were conducted with prescribed PPE, the number of persons in a building were limited to the property owner and Bylaw Inspector, in-person discussions took place outdoors, social distancing was observed at all times, and where practical, virtual inspections were conducted.

As the pandemic caused heightened anxiety for many members of the public, staff were routinely met with conflict. While an “education first” approach has always been part of the enforcement strategy, staff recognized the importance of emphasizing a cooperative approach with residents to achieve compliance.

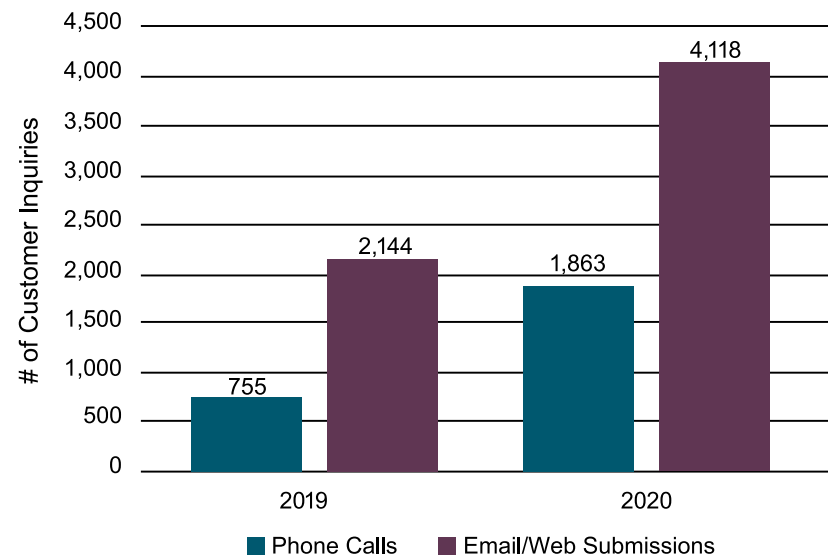
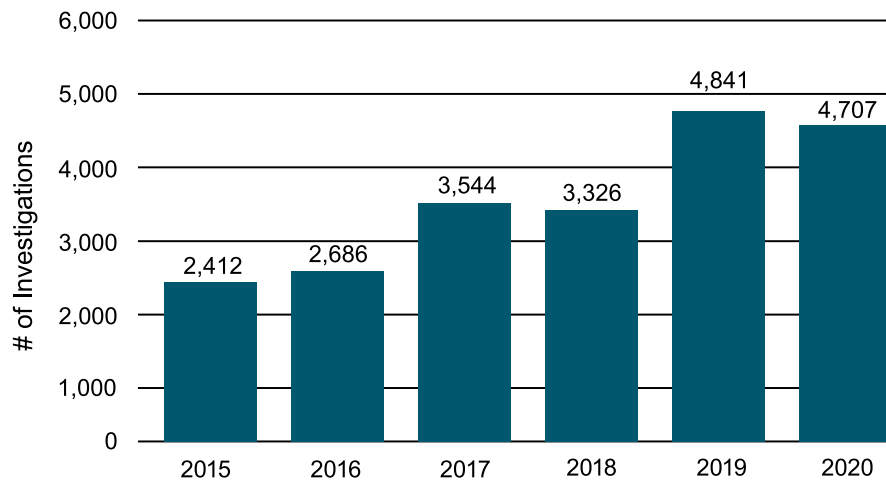


Figure 1 - Total bylaw related inquiries, 2019-2020

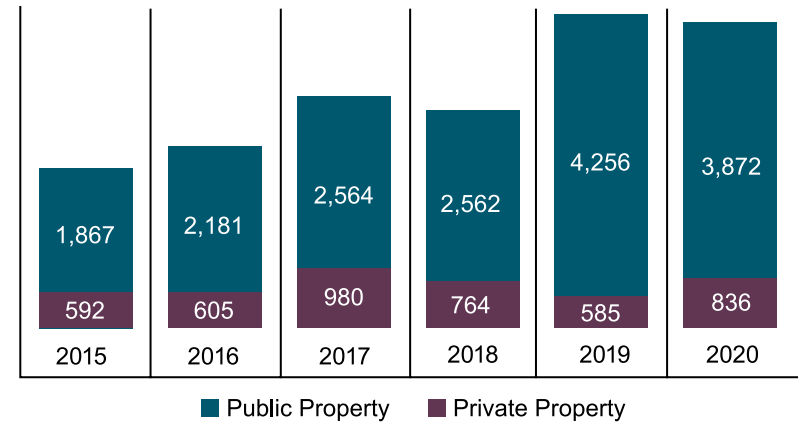
## 2020 Bylaw Investigations

In 2020, the Bylaw Inspectors conducted 4,707 inspections related to the administration and enforcement of the Traffic Bylaw (No. 7200), Temporary Sign Bylaw (No. 7491), Poster Bylaw (No.7565), Drainage Bylaw (No. 8379), Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw (No. 8463) and Zoning Bylaw (No. 8770). The administration and enforcement of these bylaws is primarily complaint driven. In contrast, a total of 4,841 inspections were completed in 2019, as indicated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 - Bylaw Compliance Investigation totals, 2015-2020**

There was a slight reduction in public property (right-of-way) bylaw investigations, however this is a result of a lighter snow season in the first quarter (January to March) of 2020. Figure 3 shows the breakdown of annual private property investigations and public property investigations.



**Figure 3 - Private property and public property investigation totals, 2015-2020**

## Permits

Bylaw Compliance reviews sign permit applications, requests for portable sign licenses, and ensures compliance with the Sign Regulations (contained in the Zoning Bylaw) is achieved. In 2020, 549 portable sign licenses and 39 sign permits were issued.

Additionally, we review sewer use permits for compliance with the Sewer Use Bylaw. In 2020, nine sewer use permits were issued.

## Legalizing Existing Suite (LES) Program

Bylaw Compliance administers the LES program, which provides a cost-effective option for owners to upgrade qualifying existing suites that were in place prior to January 1, 1999; this ensures safer accommodations for tenants. In 2020, 17 occupancy permits for legalized suites were issued.

## Release of the Good Neighbour Guide

It has been a long-standing goal for the Bylaw Compliance Section to see the creation and release of the Good Neighbour Guide. This guide was completed in 2020 and is used to help educate residents on common bylaw regulations and generally held expectations towards being a good neighbour. This easy-to-read guide addresses the most common bylaw complaints and questions. Memorable lines in the document like “Hear a cluck cluck here or a cluck cluck there?” or a reference to your “Aunt Edith’s prized ceramic unicorn” might even garner a laugh and help provide a lighthearted approach to public education.

An online, customer print-friendly document was published and shared on the City’s website, through news media and on social media platforms. Internal departments and the public continue to lean on this document to help provide a frame of reference for the community standards in place to ensure Saskatoon remains a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.



## Development Permit Inspections

Bylaw Inspector’s perform development permit inspections to ensure required site landscaping of new development sites (multi-unit residential, commercial and industrial) is completed and off-street parking is provided in accordance with the plans submitted with the respective development permit applications. In 2020, Bylaw Inspectors conducted 461 development permit inspections to confirm these requirements were in place.

## Saskatoon Fire/Bylaw Compliance Property Maintenance Program

In 2018, a joint pilot program was initiated between Saskatoon Fire and Community Standards, which saw a Bylaw Inspector in the Community Standards Department trained to address Priority 3, property maintenance concerns involving instances of tall grasses and weeds or junked vehicles. In 2020, 1,441 inspections were conducted under this program.

The pilot program concluded in November 2020 and resulted in the creation of Bylaw Inspector positions within Saskatoon Fire, with this position focusing on Priority 3 concerns, as well as other property maintenance and nuisance items.

**In 2020, the Bylaw Compliance Section completed and released the Residential Property Lot Grading Guidelines.**

## Drainage Regulation Project

For a number of years, enquiries and concerns around drainage highlighted the need for an improved model to regulate and enforce drainage matters in new and existing areas in the City. The Drainage Regulatory Project is intended to provide a more comprehensive regulatory framework aimed at mitigating lot grading and drainage conflicts between property owners and reducing instances of property damage.

In 2020, the Bylaw Compliance Section completed and released the Residential Property Lot Grading Guidelines. This guideline document is intended to provide information to homebuilders and homeowners to help ensure proper lot grading. The Guideline focuses on providing information about the property owners' responsibilities in the residential lot grading process and includes information on:

- Lot grading plans, lot grading styles and stages of lot grading;
- Design elevations;
- Landscaping;
- Drainage swales;
- Retaining walls; and
- Downspout and sump discharge.

This 20-page educational document can be found on our newly revised drainage webpage at [saskatoon.ca/lotdrainage](https://saskatoon.ca/lotdrainage). Work, including stakeholder engagement, also progressed on a number of other procedural initiatives aimed at incorporating drainage plan review and inspection procedures into the building permit process.



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

### • Back Lane Tree Maintenance Review

Currently, a number of internal departments are responsible for addressing complaints and concerns related to back lane tree growth. Back lane tree growth can cause safety and sight line issues and can interfere with overhead powerlines and waste collection. Bylaw Compliance has reviewed several options aimed at the development of a more efficient process.

A report to Committee will be tabled in early 2021, detailing the current practices and potential options for better addressing the maintenance of tree growth in back lanes.

### • Drainage Regulation Project Completion

In 2021, stakeholder engagement will continue, with the intent of finalizing the remaining initiatives identified in the Drainage Regulation Project. The implementation dates for some of these initiatives may extend into 2022. Remaining items to be completed in 2021 include:

- Revisions to the New Neighbourhood Design and Development Standards Manual to mitigate problematic lot and block layouts and to facilitate a more extensive use of back-of-lot concrete swales.
- Implementation of drainage plan review and drainage plan inspection procedures related to residential infill development and commercial building permits;
- Amendments to the Drainage Bylaw, which provide the regulatory framework to administer and enforce the various project initiatives; and
- Continued stakeholder engagement to ensure that industry stakeholders are informed of these changes.

# LICENSING AND PERMITTING

The Licensing and Permitting Section ensures that commercial, industrial, and home-based businesses are in compliance with City zoning and building requirements and provincial licenses requirements through the application of the Business License Bylaw (No. 8075) and all related policies. This section also manages taxi and rideshare licensing and plays a key role in bylaw and policy review and development within the corporation. Section responsibilities include the following:

- Reviewing applications for new business licenses, as well as annual renewals, and ensuring development standards and zoning requirements are met;
- Amending and developing related policies and regulations;
- Collecting and disseminating licensing and business profile data for various publications;
- Publishing the Business Start-Up Guide, and creating other information brochures and documents;
- Reviewing and approving applications for outdoor sidewalk cafes and parking patios, mobile food trucks, mobile vendors and food carts; and,
- Management, administration and enforcement of the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw (No. 9651).

## 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Continued Business Growth during COVID-19

The Licensing and Permitting Section remained fully operational and maintained service levels to businesses throughout 2020. As we recognized that uncertainty was a reality for many businesses, renewal notices for business licenses were suspended from April 2020 to June 2020. Staff continued to provide service remotely and the ability to apply for a new license or renew an existing licensing was not disrupted at any point during the pandemic. In 2020, 1,076 new businesses were licensed, bringing the total number of businesses to a new record high of 12,073.

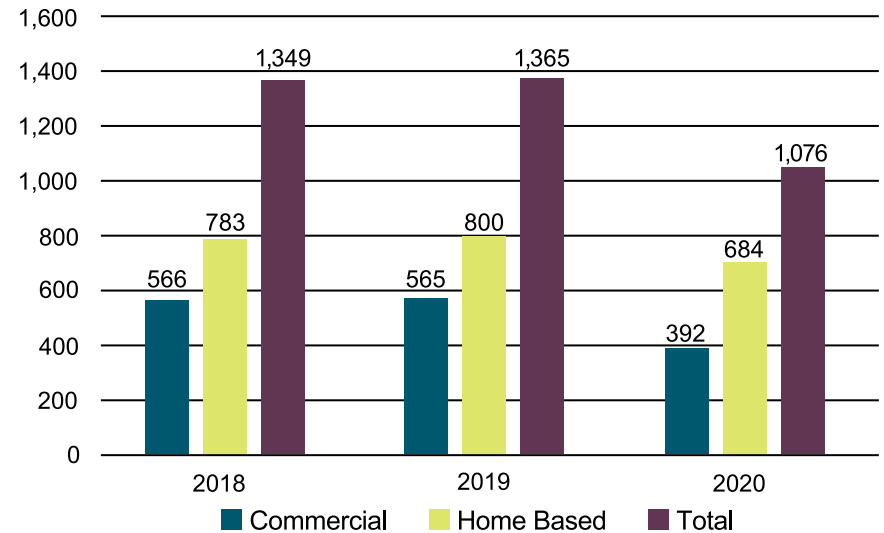


Figure 4 - Total number of new businesses, 2018-2020

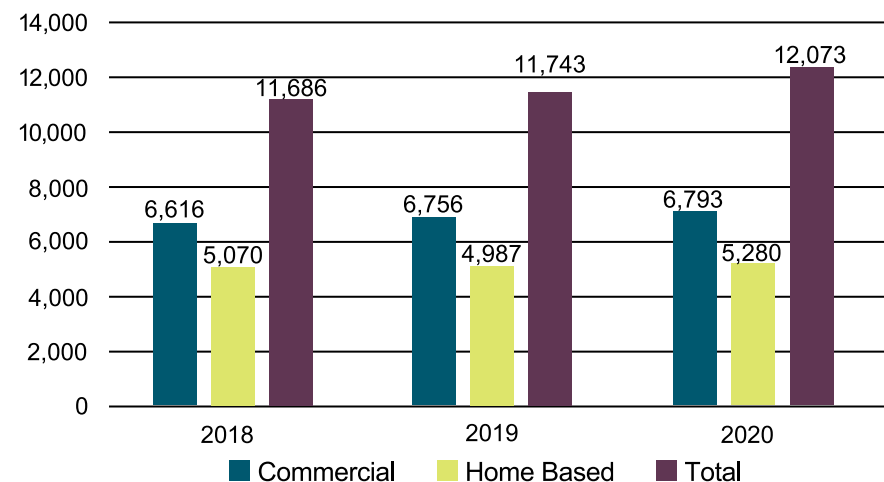


Figure 5 - Total number of businesses (based on the number of businesses licensed), 2018-2020



As a business license is valid for one year from the date it was issued, business closure information is not received in real time; there is a delay as to when the business closes and when it is recorded by our office. Whenever a business receives an annual renewal notice, they are asked to record any changes to their business or to advise if the business has closed. For that reason, it will take an additional year of collecting data before the full impact of the pandemic on licensed business is documented. We are expecting a higher volume of business closures as renewal notices are returned throughout 2021.



## Short Term Accommodations

Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw (No. 8770) and the Business License Bylaw (No. 8075) were adopted in order to update the existing regulations for short term accommodations; this was to address the significant changes in the industry brought about through the popularization of hosting platforms, such as Airbnb and VRBO. Previously, short term accommodations required a business license, building permit, development permit, special inspection and in most zoning districts, discretionary use approval for a bed and breakfast home or hostel.

Under the new regulations, the reference to bed and breakfast homes was updated to identify two new land uses: homestays (for hosts that provide short term accommodation within their principal dwelling) and short-term rental properties (for hosts providing short term accommodation in a rental property). In addition to updated terminology, several key amendments to application requirements and development standards were made including:

- Up to six guests in total may be hosted;
- The requirements for a building permit, development permit and special inspection were removed;
- Discretionary use approval is not required for homestays;
- Discretionary use approval is required for short term rental properties in low and medium density residential zoning districts; and
- A business license is not required to host one or two guests in your own home.



## Parking Patios Adapt to COVID-19

Parking patios are a temporary conversion of public parking stalls on the city street that accommodate tables and chairs for outdoor dining. This typically involves constructing a raised deck or platform in the parking stall to provide seating or providing seating on the sidewalk and constructing a boardwalk in the parking stall. These conventional parking patios have been licensed in the City of Saskatoon since 2015. A parking patio is considered an extension of a Commercial Business License for a restaurant and therefore an additional license fee is not required. Typically, a parking fee is charged based on the number of parking spaces used to accommodate this use, and number of paid parking days during which the parking patio is in place. Previously, parking patios were only permitted from April until October.

To further support businesses during the pandemic, City Council made two changes to the existing program: conventional parking patios were permitted to operate all year and parking fees were waived until 2022. The policy changes enabled businesses to provide additional outdoor dining options. A record of eight businesses participated in the parking patio program in 2020.

City Council also adopted a new asphalt patio program, which allowed all types of businesses to utilize the parking stall on the public street directly in front of their business from June 29, to September 15, 2020. This program permitted a



restaurant to provide tables and chairs directly on the asphalt parking stall rather than construct a deck, an office to provide outdoor seating, or a retail store to display merchandise. One business participated in the program.

## Cannabis Business License Application Fees

The business license application fees for cannabis related businesses are intended to recover all costs associated with the licensing program, to ensure that it is not subsidized by other licensing programs. Previously, the Province of Saskatchewan awarded cannabis retail store licenses by lottery and permitted a maximum of seven stores to operate in Saskatoon. As the number of businesses was restricted and only seven businesses were expected to be contributing to the cost recovery, licensing fees were set at \$20,000 for these new businesses.

In anticipation of the Province of Saskatchewan removing the cap on the number of stores, effective in the fall 2020, the cannabis related business application fee was reduced to \$4,500, as there would be additional businesses contributing to cost recovery objectives. In 2020, two additional cannabis retail stores were licensed, in addition to six renewals from those awarded through the lottery system. One cannabis production facility was also licensed. A large number of cannabis retail stores are expected to be licensed in 2021: in addition to the eight licensed businesses, development permits for 22 stores (a preliminary requirement prior to obtaining a business license) have been issued.



## Vehicles for Hire

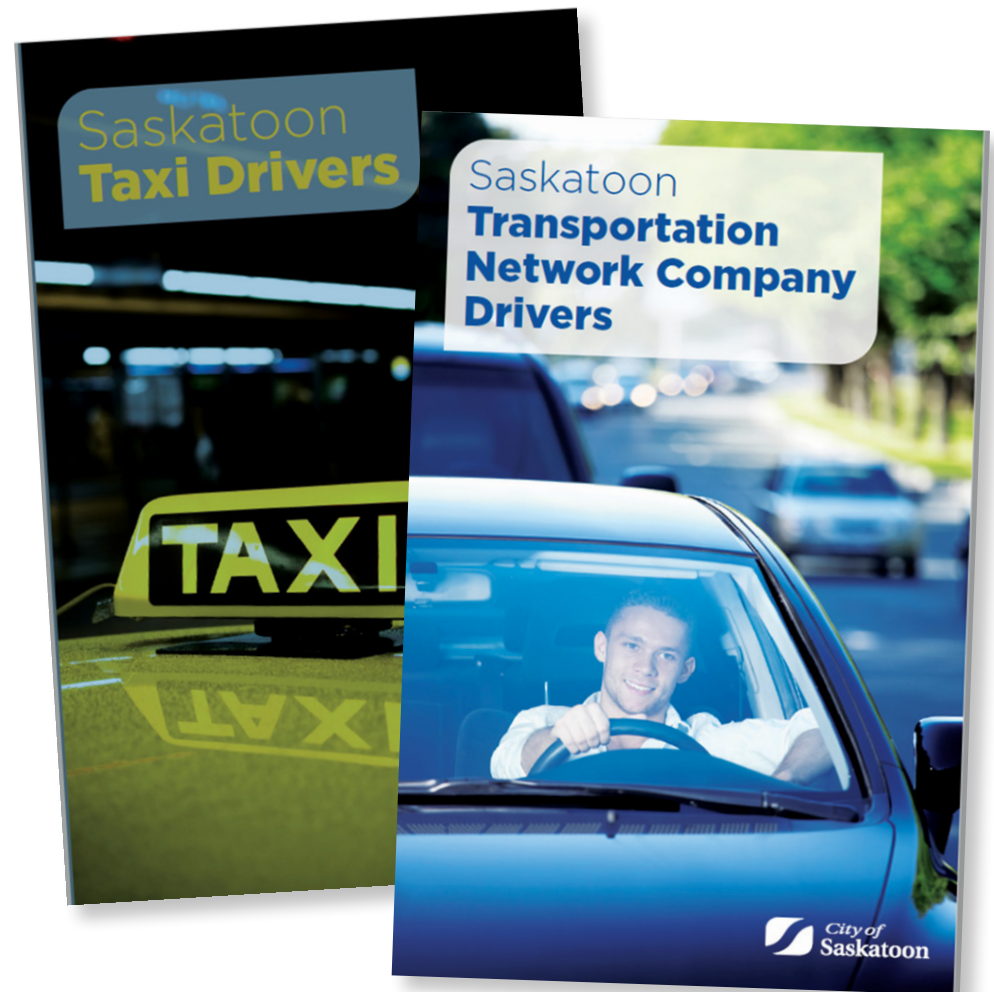
The fares that taxis may charge are regulated in the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (No. 9651). To ensure taxi fares remain consistent with the cost of operating a taxi over time, Licensing and Permitting staff undertake an annual taxi cost index review. Using Statistics Canada data (compared to the base year of 2011) and, in coordination with the taxi industry, we analyze several key operating costs for taxis and recommended fare increases. On average the fee increase reflects a 7.8% increase to the cost of a five-kilometre taxi trip. These fare increases are inline with increases in operational costs. In 2020, the main fare inputs included:

- The minimum fare (or drop rate)
- Distance charge; and
- Wait charge.

Fares were last increased in 2016.

Enterprise taxi licenses, a form of temporary taxi licenses, are awarded to drivers for a specified term through a lottery. As a condition of receiving the license, the driver must agree to be available for dispatch at least 40 hours per week, apart from 8 weeks of holidays, or medical leave. During the pandemic, some Enterprise Taxi Drivers have been unable to work full time due to low demand for taxi service resulting from unprecedented reductions in travel demand and public health orders. An amendment to the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw was adopted to temporarily suspend the requirement of an Enterprise license holder to be available for a minimum of 40 hours of dispatch, during a pandemic.

Tables 1 and 2 on the following page set out the annual licensing fees, fares and charges as established in the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw.



**Table 1 – Transportation Network Company and Taxi Fees**

Transportation Network Company		Taxi	
Fees and Surcharges	Amount	Fees and Surcharges	Amount
TNC Licence Fee - 1 to 10 TNC vehicles	\$2,500	Taxi Licence Fee	\$525
TNC Licence Fee - 11 to 50 TNC vehicles	\$12,500	Taxi Broker Licence Fee	\$305
TNC Licence Fee - 11 to 50 TNC vehicle	\$25,000	Taxi Driver Licence Fee	\$35
Per-Trip Fee	\$0.20	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Licence Fee	\$25
Per Trip Accessibility Surcharge	\$0.07	Temporary Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Licence Fee	\$25
		Enterprise Taxi Licence Fee	\$350
		Taxi Licence Transfer Fee	\$375
		Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Licence Transfer Fee	\$375
		Owner Plate Replacement Fee	\$25
		Enterprise Taxi Lottery Participation Fee	\$50

**Table 2 – 2020 Transportation Network Company and Taxi Fares**

Transportation Network Company	Taxi
<b>General Fares</b>	
Minimum Fare: \$3.75	Minimum Fare: \$3.75 for the first 125 metres or portion thereof
	\$0.25 for each additional 117 metres or portion thereof
	\$0.25 for each additional 35 seconds of time while the taxi is on a trip, including waiting at the request of passengers
<b>General Van Fares</b>	
	1.5 times the amount shown on the taximeter when a van taxi is carrying five or more passengers or is carrying an amount of luggage or freight that cannot be accommodated by a sedan-type taxi.
<b>Hourly Fares</b>	
	\$40.00 per hour up to 16 kilometres; and
	\$2.14 for each additional kilometre in excess of 16.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

- **Taxi and Transportation Network Company Consultation**

Taxis and TNCs operate under differing business models and each require unique regulations. However, the one of the objectives of the regulations is to ensure that the licensing requirements provide a level playing field. Staff undertook further consultation with both industries to gather their input on the existing regulations and to identify any further opportunities to establish more balanced regulations between industries. This was a significant undertaking with varying interests and perspectives on the optimization of regulations.

Engagement with industry stakeholders was completed in 2020, with a report to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation considered in February 2021. At the time of writing this Annual Report, staff have been requested to provide some additional detail this matter and will bring forward additional information in the coming months.

- **Sign Regulations**

The City of Saskatoon regulates the use and forms of signs, for safety and aesthetic reasons. The purpose of sign regulations is to ensure the use and placement of signage does not create a hazard or nuisance, that they are well maintained and the number of signs does not impact the attractiveness of the city.

The Zoning Bylaw regulates the placement of signs on private property. Amendments to the regulations are required to ensure they continue to be relevant and are meeting the objective of the program. The first round of consultation with internal and external stakeholders was conducted in 2019. In 2021, the Community Standards Department will implement an engagement plan to continue the conversation with stakeholders and recommend proposed amendments to existing sign regulations, with the intent of having updated regulations in place by the end of 2021.

- **Business License Application Fee**

The Administration has been requested to review and report on options to consolidate the business license fee schedule, providing a single annual license fee for all businesses, whether new or renewing. As part of this review, extensive collaboration with the business community will be undertaken; engagement for this project will begin in 2021, with reporting to align with the 2022-2023 budget year.

# PARKING SERVICES

The Parking Services Section manages parking supply and demand within the City through several parking programs. Parking programs increase public safety, promote unrestricted traffic flow and support a healthy business community. Ultimately parking management affects the quality of life in Saskatoon.

The Traffic Bylaw (No. 7200), Residential Parking Program Bylaw (No. 7862) and the Impoundment Bylaw (No. 8640) provide the ability to manage parking supply and demand. These bylaws allow for regulation of parking through:

- Charging for parking time;
- Charging for the exclusive use of parking spaces;
- Restricting parking time;
- Administration of several parking permit programs;
- Parking enforcement; and
- Impounding vehicles with significant outstanding parking tickets until paid.

Parking revenues fund the cost of Parking Services programs, support the mill rate to reduce reliance on property taxes, fund the streetscaping reserve, and contribute to the funding of qualifying Business Improvement Districts.

Parking Services also provides:

- Civic parking allocation, ongoing management of the program, and lot maintenance;
- Public education on parking requirements through one-on-one customer service, the city's webpage, public announcements, and media campaigns;
- Impoundment services for Police entities; and
- Personal delivery of time-sensitive legal documents such as subpoenas and summons on behalf of the Federal and Provincial Courts of Canada, the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Police Services.

## 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Adapting Parking Programs during COVID-19

Parking Services staff adapted and responded to manage the effects of the pandemic through pausing, modifying and reinstating various parking programs

over the course of the year. We successfully implemented 16 program changes through collaborative efforts. These efforts included a process of impact assessment, reporting to City Council for direction and approval, planning, implementation, public communication and procedural and staffing changes. Some of these program changes resulted in the need to temporarily reduce contract staffing levels, which in turn has affected Officer retention.

Along with the associated parking enforcement changes, program modifications included:

- Requirements for pay parking, Residential Parking Program time on the street, and city-wide 72-hour parking time limits were suspended between March 20 and May 25;
- Modifications to the Temporary Reserved Parking program;
- Suspension of permit renewal requirements for the Residential Parking Program and Disabled Parking Program, occurred on April 2. Permit sales resumed with a phase-in approach between July and October;
- Suspension of the Chronic offender parking enforcement operations from March 20 to June 22 (modified) and normal operations resumed on September 8;
- Modification of operations at the Impound Lot required to address COVID related protocols and ensure the health and safety of staff and the public, including reduced the hours of operation and vehicle retrievals for the public scheduled by appointment to manage the number of people at the facility at any given time. This requirement remains the standard practice as the pandemic continues; and
- Pay parking requirements on Saturdays were suspended for the period of December 12, 2020, to March 27, 2021.

With each program modification, significant attention to communications ensured timely public notification of these changes.

## Health and Safety Initiatives

While Parking Services daily operations were affected by the pandemic, the health and safety of our staff and the public remained our top priority. Ongoing operational changes addressed social-distancing requirements of employees and members of the public. Where possible, normal operations could resume by applying preventative measures.

Most of the city staff in the Parking Section transitioned seamlessly to work from home, with only occasional need to attend the work site. This in turn allowed the required space within the office for those whose work required their attendance at the office or in the field, including contracted staff. Health and Safety Plans were revised to comply with further restrictions set out by the Province of Saskatchewan and the City and as program/service delivery expectations changed.

As part of our ongoing focus on continuous improvement and our commitment to safety, body cameras were purchased for city and contract staff working in Parking Services, who have frequent interactions with the public, with high potential for conflict. Ongoing training initiatives to ensure staff are well versed in de-escalation and other techniques also help to mitigate situations where potential for conflict is high.

## Permitting and Policy Reviews

Ongoing work to Policy review provides the opportunity to increase collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders, and ensures programs and requirements reflect current community needs.

An extensive review of the Residential Parking Program, involving significant community consultation, was completed in 2020. An approved report to City Council outlined 14 program improvements to the Residential Parking Program and was approved, with updated bylaw reflecting these changes to be finalized early in 2021.

Consultation with the Business Improvement Districts to review the Parking Revenue distribution formula began in late 2020, with recommendations for a revised and simplified formula to be brought forward for Council consideration in 2021.

Work is also underway to document the administrative procedures for all permitting programs. In addition, staff will continue to review and update existing policies and programs, including the Disabled Parking program.

## Parking Operations

While the pandemic has had a significant impact on the use of pay parking in the high demand parking areas, the work of the Parking Operations continued to ensure customer service needs are met and to address program needs including the following:

- A number of contracts for services that support the parking operations were due for renewal in 2020, including the contract for the existing pay parking system. This was renewed for an additional five-year period;
- Numerous operational changes were required due to program change directives and to ensure the safety of our staff during the pandemic; and
- As a positive benefit arising from the pandemic, staff were able to complete preventative maintenance and cleaning on 100% of the pay stations, exceeding the yearly target for this work by 25%.

Revenues generated through pay parking were significantly reduced in 2020, as a result of the pandemic, with fewer vehicles in the downtown areas and the suspension of pay parking requirements for a length of time. Revenues related to pay parking were approximately 51% of revenues in 2019.



## Parking Enforcement, Impoundment Operations and Document Delivery

Parking staff in these program areas quickly adapted and implemented numerous program changes. Enforcement practices were sensitive to situations where vehicle owners may be in self-isolation and Officers focused on the identification of safety hazards and public education first.

- Over 3,500 time-sensitive legal document deliveries occurred in 2020, including 270 deliveries for Parking Services. Approximately half of the deliveries were related to City Bylaws and the rest were related to municipal, provincial, and federal police and court services.
- Our Impound Lot services include the intake and management of impounded vehicles at a secured lot. Impoundments include the seizure of vehicles owned by those having outstanding parking tickets. Vehicle impoundments were reduced by 24% in 2020, compared to 2019, in part due to the suspension of boot crew activity during the early months of the pandemic. Of the 1,551 vehicles impounded in 2020, 74% were due to parking infractions, with the remaining 26% related to contraventions falling under the jurisdiction of Bylaw Compliance, Saskatoon Police Service and other policing services. Owners retrieved almost 80% of impounded vehicles. Unclaimed vehicles were disposed through auction, or as scrap.
- The Chronic Offender Parking Enforcement (COPE) squad, also known as the “Boot Crew”, was formed in 2007 with an enforcement mandate to locate, immobilize (boot) and arrange for towing of vehicles of owners with long-term outstanding parking tickets. The COPE Squad also impounds vehicles identified in violation of the Traffic Bylaw (No. 7200), such as unregistered vehicles. Even with a 3-month suspension of operations, the COPE Squad retrieved payment for 3,500 outstanding unpaid parking tickets in 2020, which is approximately 55% of those addressed in 2019.

## Public Education

A focus on public education through one-on-one customer service, marketing and other communications has resulted in an enhanced understanding of the regulations relating to parking matters in Saskatoon. Throughout 2020, extra efforts have been made to communicate the many changes associated with changes to parking operations during the pandemic. This has included service alerts, Public Service Announcements, news releases and updates on social media.

Public Service Announcements are released ahead of holidays to inform the public of requirements for metered parking payments and hours of operation for owners looking to retrieve their vehicle from the Impound Lot. When appropriate, quick short-term communications to the public occur through service alerts issued through the City’s website and the Parking webpage.



@cityofsaskatoon · Mar 20

Reminder - free parking Saturday... only 2 left!  
Parking is free every Saturday until March 27, 2021 in City-managed public pay parking areas. Remember that all other parking requirements remain in effect, including posted time limits and required permits.  
[#FreeSaturdayParking](#)





## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

- **Implement Residential Parking Program (RPP)**

An updated bylaw addressing changes to the RPP program was approved by City Council in early 2021, a culmination of an extensive review and community engagement program through 2020. The changes outlined will better reflect the needs of the community, and residents who live in neighbourhoods that experience significant on-street parking pressures (generated by nearby institutions and businesses). Updated communication material relating to the Residential Parking will ensure the public and other key stakeholders are aware of the changes to the RPP program. During the period when the RPP was under review, requests for RPP expansions were put on hold. With the Bylaw now approved, implementation of program improvements will begin, including reinstating the RPP expansion process.

- **Complete Capital Project to Remove Parking Meter Posts and Re-establish Line Marking of Parking Spaces**

A two-year Capital Project to remove old parking meter posts, repair the amenity strip and undertake line painting of parking spaces started in the Fall of 2020, and is scheduled to be wrapped up in 2021. In conjunction with this work, a new reserved parking signage system has been purchased. Parking Operations staff have started installing the metal bases that support signs. This signage is more functional and aesthetically pleasing and was designed to align with City standards.

- **Assessment of Data Bases and Technology Solutions**

A report to Committee will identify opportunities that leverage recent corporate technology changes to enhance the management of various Parking Services operations, customer service tracking and access to operational data.

- **Electric Vehicle Fleet Evaluation**

Parking Services will participate in a corporate pilot project replacing gas with electric fleet vehicles for City operations. We will trial one electric vehicle to assess the potential benefit of switching to electric fleet vehicles in the future.

- **Temporary Reserved Parking (TRP) Program**

The TRP program reserves on-street pay parking for non-standard uses such as special events, development or maintenance on adjacent properties, tour bus parking, or parking patios. A review of the TRP program will be completed in 2021, with reporting on recommended program updates brought forward for Council consideration.





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April 2021