

Leisure Guide Focus Groups Key Take-Away

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Background & Methodology

In Fall of 2017, the City of Saskatoon (City) contracted Insightrix Research to conduct a survey with the general population of residents living in Saskatoon and surrounding areas, Community Associations and various advertisers to back the City's move to explore alternative options for format and distribution of the City's primary communication tool used to promote recreation and community development facilities – the seasonal Leisure Guide.

The results of the multimode survey showed that the Leisure Guide adds value to the vast majority of Saskatoon residents in both printed and online format (69% and 64% perceived value, respectively).

Based on the results of the quantitative study, a large proportion of residents supported keeping the printed guide. However, similar proportion of Saskatoon residents also supported the idea of discontinuing the distribution of the Leisure Guide to every household, and have it available for pickup at the City of Saskatoon leisure facilities and library locations. Respondents also mentioned that more awareness and a user-friendly online Leisure Guide will encourage them to use the online version of the guide.

To help validate the survey research results and fully understand how residents of Saskatoon interact with the seasonal Leisure Guide, the City was interested in conducting in-person focus groups with Saskatoon residents. To meet the City's research objectives, Insightrix conducted three (3) in-person focus groups with the following criteria, which were selected based on groupings from the quantitative report:

| | Description | Date |
|----------|---|---------------|
| Group 1: | Have children under the age of 18 living in the household | 14 March 2018 |
| Group 2: | 18 to 34 year old with no children | 14 March 2018 |
| Group 3: | 55+ years old with no children | 15 March 2018 |

The following screening criteria were also applied for recruiting to the three groups:

Participant needed to live in Saskatoon for at least six months

- Had to visit a City of Saskatoon leisure facility at least once in the last one year
- Needed to be familiar with the City of Saskatoon Leisure Guide (Print and Online)
- Specifically for Group 1 (Household with children below 18 years), a mix of different age groups of children (4 to 8 yrs., 9 to 10 yrs., 10 to 13 yrs. and 13 to 18 yrs.) in the household was recruited. Participants of this group also needed to have registered their children for a City of Saskatoon leisure/recreation program in the past one year

Proposed format and distribution changes of the seasonal Leisure Guide which were tested in the focus groups based on the 2017 Leisure Guide quantitative research findings:



Distribution → The majority of focus group participants support discontinuing home delivery and having the printed guide available at the Leisure Centres and library locations. Quantitatively, a higher proportion of Saskatoon residents support a limited print distribution (70%) compared to keeping the distribution as is (61%).



Format → The majority of focus group participants support a concise version of the printed guide except a few gen-Xers with children. Their main concern is not finding all the information they need online. Quantitatively, a similar proportion of Saskatoon residents support a concise version as those who support keeping the Leisure Guide as is (74% & 76% respectively).



Detailed Findings

Different Profiles of Leisure Activity Users

Based on the three focus groups, **profiles** of users were identified with different needs and views when it comes to the seasonal Leisure Guide.

Mixed-Mode Parents

Tech-Savvy Parents

Pre-Occupied Millennials

Modern-Day Empty-Nesters

Old School











Prevalence: majority of gen-Xers

Parents who have younger children below the age of 18 in the household.

They are still somewhat emotionally attached to the printed guide and use it as reminder to register but are willing to do whatever it takes to get the information needed to register their children for leisure programs.

They feel a lot of guilt and stress if they don't register their children for activities on time.

Prevalence: few gen-Xers

Parents who have younger children below the age of 18 in the household.

They either do not receive the printed guide delivered at their home or find going online more convenient.

They too feel a lot of guilt and stress if they do not register their children for activities on time.

Prevalence: majority of millennials

They do not participate in activities as often as other groups. They use the Leisure Centres occasionally for drop-ins.

They prefer information that is readily accessible to them. They do not have the patience to navigate a website which requires 'more than one click' to get to the information they need.

They like access to as much information as possible. Hence a few participant in the group liked the fact that the printed guide shows all information in one place.

Prevalence: majority of seniors

They no longer have a pressing need to pay attention to registered classes or deadlines for registering for programs.

They are still interested in registering for some leisure activities like cooking classes, cardiac wellness etc. but, they are more laid back about it.

Some of them prefer using online modes to get information about leisure activities.

Prevalence: few from each group

There were a few "old-school" respondents in each age group.

They are more traditional and are emotionally attached to the printed guide. They find the printed guide easier to use compared to going online.



Prevalence: Majority of gen-Xers

Parents who have younger children below the age of 18 in the household.

They are still somewhat emotionally attached to the printed guide and use it as reminder to register but are willing to do whatever it takes to get the information needed to register their children for leisure programs. They feel a lot of guilt and stress if they don't register their children for activities on time .

"It (the printed Leisure Guide) prompts me. I love browsing... window shopping is my main thing... I flip through to get ideas but I know it's mainly for swimming.... But, It is easier to scroll through online than flipping and I can use the search function."

Gen-Xers with children

Mixed-Mode Parents

Leisure Information Needs

Areas of interest:

- Information about registered classes for their children (especially Red Cross Swimming)
- Drop-in classes occasionally
- Explore new activities for their children
- Explore Community Association activities

Source of information:

- Mix between the printed guide and looking for further details online (Drop-in Online or PDF)
- Social Media (e.g. Mom's groups Community Association pages) [Less common]
- Word of Mouth [Less common]

Method of registration: Mainly online (few mentioned using the phone)

Current Trigger for registering: Receiving the printed guide at home

Preference

Reaction to "Phase Out" idea:

They claim they will adapt, even though some of them are emotionally attached to the printed guide. They like the feel of paper and like to browse through it to get ideas for children activities. If the printed guide is no longer delivered to their home, they claim they will pick up a copy elsewhere (for example at the library / leisure centres). However a risk is that they also admit they may lose track of guide delivery/registration dates and would require some form of 'trigger' to remind them to register in the absence of the printed guide.

Ideal way to communicate with them and alternative trigger for registering:

It is very important for this group to get a reminder to register so that they do not miss the registration window. Some suggestions for alternate triggers mentioned in the group include:

- Email Reminders
- Flyer or Postcard mailed to their home
- Social Media

Suggestions:

 A more user-friendly registration platform and a dynamic online source of information that allows them to highlight and tab points of interest



Prevalence: Few gen-Xers
Parents who have younger
children below the age of 18
in the household.

They either do not receive the printed guide delivered at their home or find going online more convenient.

They too feel a lot of guilt and stress if they do not register their children for activities on time.

"I don't think I ever need that (the leisure guide) in my life again I think it should just be an app" **Gen-Xers with children**

Tech-Savvy Parents

Leisure Information Needs

Areas of interest:

- Information about registered classes for their children (especially Red Cross Swimming)
- Drop-in classes, occasionally
- Community Association activities

Source of information:

- Some use Google to find Leisure Guide or Drop-in Online page
- Others have bookmarked the City of Saskatoon Leisure Guide and Drop-in Online pages or have bookmarked or downloaded the Leisure Guide PDF

Method of registration: online

Current Trigger for registering: Word-of-Mouth

Preference

Reaction to "Phase Out" idea:

They are totally fine with the printed guide not being distributed to households and the guide being available online only

Ideal way to communicate with them:

They are satisfied with finding all the information online, but would prefer something more interactive than the PDF guide that allows them to quickly search for what they need and have useful functions like highlighting, bookmarking and tabbing. Even though the City has an interactive PDF guide available online, none of the respondents mentioned or have used the interactive online guide

Suggestions:

- Better user interface for the website pages & PDF guide
- Mobile App



Prevalence: Majority of millennials

They do not participate in activities as often as other groups. They use the Leisure Centres occasionally for drop-ins.

They prefer information that is readily accessible to them. They do not have the patience to navigate a website which requires 'more than one click' to get to the information they need.

They like access to as much information as possible. Hence a few participant in the group liked the fact that the printed guide shows all information in one place.

"For me this (Drop-in Online) is a nightmare, there is too much going on I have a hard time concentrating" **Millennials Group**

Pre-occupied Millennials

Leisure Information Needs

Areas of interest:

They are mainly interested in drop-in activities and rentals. They prefer to keep their options open and usually only look for very specific or 'spur of the moment' activities (e.g. gym, pool, basketball).

Source of information:

They mainly go online to check out drop-ins, some check out the PDF and few like to browse through the printed guide mainly for drop-ins, when they receive it at home. When going online, they either search through Google or have the links bookmarked.

Current Trigger for registering:

They do not need a trigger since they are not that interested in registered classes.

Preference

Reaction to "Phase Out" idea:

They will not be impacted. They are not under any pressure to register and prefer a more spontaneous and convenient method for retrieving information.

Ideal way to communicate with them:

- Mobile App reminders that syncs with their Calendar
- Emails
- Social Media

Suggestions:

- A completely revamped website that is highly-user friendly and solely dedicated to leisure activities
- A mobile app for drop-ins that send out notifications & syncs with their calendar
- Streamline the printed Leisure Guide

"I just really like going through all the different things that are offered (in the printed guide)"

Millennials Group



Prevalence: Majority of seniors
They no longer have a pressing
need to pay attention to
registered classes or deadlines
for registering for programs.

They are still interested in registering for some leisure activities like cooking classes, cardiac wellness etc. but they are more laid back about it.

Some of them prefer using online modes to get information about leisure activities.

"I'd like to see this phased out and have a version available at Leisure centres and the library" – **Seniors Group**

Modern-day Empty-nesters

Leisure Information Needs

Areas of interest:

- Drop-ins
- Some look for registered classes for themselves (e.g. aquasize and Heart Recovery club)
- Few search for activities for their grandchildren (e.g. swimming classes, pools, skating, etc.)
- Few look for Community Association activities

Source of information:

Some of them check out the printed guide for classes and then continue their search online. Others go online to the drop-in site or PDF, without referring to the printed guide. They mainly find out about Community Association activities from newsletters, Facebook or word of mouth and only few refer to the Leisure Guide.

Method of registration: online, phone

Current Trigger for registering:

They are very laid back about the registration process and don't seem to worry too much about having a trigger

Preference

Reaction to "Phase Out" idea:

They are onboard with the idea of not receiving the printed guide at home. Most would go online to find the information they need while only a few claimed they would pick up a copy from the Leisure centres or at the library.

Ideal way to communicate with them/Alternative trigger for registering:

- Mobile App with notifications
- Posters at Leisure Centres and the library
- City of Saskatoon Service Alerts

Suggestions:

- A mobile app that has all the Leisure Guide Contents
- Streamline the printed Leisure Guide
- Improved readability (larger font, less busy) and a more user-friendly website pages



Prevalence: few from each group

There were a few "old-school" respondents in each age group.

They are more traditional and are emotionally attached to the printed guide. They find the printed guide easier to use compared to going online.

"It's just like the newspaper, when you are reading online you go straight to the thing that you are interested in but when you are looking at the paper you see the whole thing"

Seniors Group

"If I am forced to, yes (I will get it from the facility)"

Gen-Xers Group

Old School

Leisure Information Needs

Areas of interest:

Various needs based on age group.

Source of information:

They find out all the details from the printed guide but most make the final registration online. Very few respondents mentioned that they register by phone.

Current Trigger for registering:

Receiving the printed guide at home.

Preference

Reaction to "Phase Out" idea:

They are quite reluctant to accept the change and still prefer to receive the printed guide at home, mainly because they are attached to the feel of paper and enjoy browsing through the guide to explore all the different activities available to them. They also like to highlight and tab important information. They expressed concerns on the alternative ideas for a registration trigger; for example email reminders getting lost in the junk mail folders (mostly among gen-Xers). Others were discouraged by the user interface of current online options such as drop-in site and registration page. They also disliked the PDF's endless scrolling and the inability to highlight and tab. They were also worried that they wouldn't be able to find all the information they need online. Meanwhile, very few respondents mentioned that they are generally not very tech-savvy and do not like browsing online. One respondent also claimed that she may consider non-city programs in the absence of an alternative trigger to remind her to sign up for registered programs.

Ideal way to communicate with them/Alternative trigger for registering:

If the printed guide is not delivered to their home, they will pick the guide up from a Leisure Centre or at the library. However, they would really prefer that the City continue delivering the guide to their homes Suggestions:

An option to opt-in to receive the printed guide at home



Current Printed Guide vs. Current Online Options

Printed vs. Online

Respondents across all groups, saw advantages and disadvantages to the current sources of information, both printed and online.



Current printed guide

Advantages

- Acts as a trigger for registration
- Ability to browse and see different activities, Everything is in one place

"I love the Leisure Guide I go through everything" – Gen-Xers

- · Highlight, bookmark & tab interesting things
- Browse activities offered by all community associations and organizations
- · Advertising section

"I like the guide because at the back they have the clubs and organizations" – Gen-Xers Group

- Suitable for those who don't have internet access
- Helpful for newcomers/recent immigrants to educate them about the leisure activities available in Saskatoon

Disadvantages

• Too much information

"It's like reading the phonebook. It's just too much information." – Seniors Focus Group

- Difficult to find specific information quickly
- · Not good for the environment, wasteful
- Font is too small (for seniors)
- Not up-to-date (Drop-ins)

"If I am going to the pool I can't find out from here (the printed guide). If it is closed for some reason... but I can if I go online"—

Millennials Focus Group



Current online options

Advantages

- More updated information (Drop-in)
- Easier to find specific information (Drop-in)
- Ability to use search function in the PDF
- · Environmentally friendly

Disadvantages

- Not user-friendly
- Not well integrated (Separate links for PDF, drop-in page and registration page)
- Takes several clicks to reach link (this feedback was mostly from millennials)
- Inability to browse through all options (registration & drop-in pages)
- Difficult to read font size on mobile (seniors)
- Endless scrolling in the PDF Guide
- Inability to highlight or tab things of interests in the PDF Guide
- Difficult to go back and forth between the PDF and the registration page, to get codes
- Does not include information about Community Association activities on the Leisure Online page

Printed Guide Suggestions

Design your own guide exercise: Respondents were given excerpts from a typical seasonal Leisure Guide and were asked to 'design their own printed guide' based on the sections that were important to them and express any other ideas they had. Here are the suggestions based on that exercise.



Printed Guide Suggestions Summary

Suggested Guide Format:

Admission Rate

Мар

Leisure Centres

Drop-in Programs (concise version)

How to register

Red Cross (few suggest less details)

Shorter modified Community Association section

Rentals (less popular- some suggest removing it)

Ice Skating (less popular- some suggest removing it)

List of free activities

Ads (some prefer index, others prefer full ads)

Some Gen-Xers with children, preferred to keep the detailed versions of the Registrations and Community Associations because they are worried they won't easily find this information online

74% of residents support the idea to reduce the number of pages, with more detailed information available online

(2017 Leisure Guide Survey)

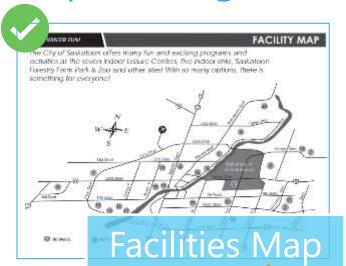
"I like the short form because it gives you all the information in a quick glance and if you need more information you can go online or call."

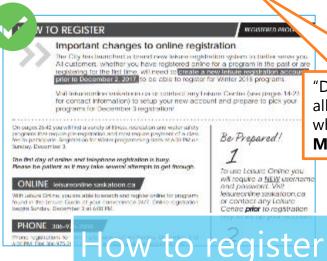
Seniors Focus Group

A closer look at the printed guide sections...





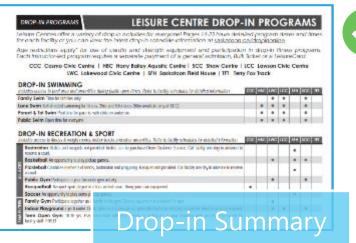




There was unanimous support across groups for keeping the admissions, map and registration segments of the seasonal Leisure Guide.
The majority of respondents, across all groups, also liked the Leisure Centre listings. A few respondents suggested adding the abbreviations of the Leisure Centres' names.

"Despite having lived here all my life, I still don't know where everything is!" **Millennials Group**

Drop-in section







The majority of respondents preferred the concise summary of drop-ins and said they would refer to it to get a general idea but then would go to the Drop-in Online site if they wanted more details. This is mainly because Drop-in Online is more up-to-date and easier to search than the printed details.

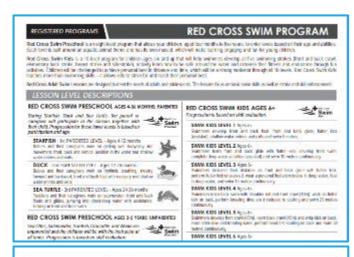
Meanwhile, few respondents would like to keep the detailed drop-ins section in the printed guide because they like having all the details in one place and like the way it is categorized by each centre.

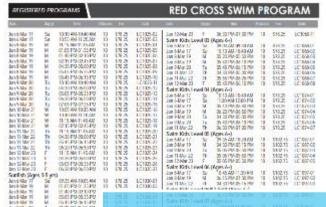
"I like the general one it gives an idea of which Leisure centres have which activities but then you have to search online for the details such as timing"

Gen-Xers Group

"Sometime, me and my friend would want to get together. Hold on! Let me get through five pages to see if the pool is closed today!" **Millennials Group**

Registered Classes





Red Cross Details

?

The importance of keeping the registered classes section in the printed guide varied across groups, with some millennials and seniors preferring to remove it entirely. However the majority of respondents, especially the gen-Xers with children would prefer to keep the registered classes section in the guide and they represent the biggest target audience who sign up their children for these programs.

There were a few suggestions around making this

There were a few suggestions around making this section concise.

"The most important thing (in the printed guide) of course is registering" **Gen-Xers Group**

"Different target audience have different needs " **Seniors Group**

"I tend to want something that's a little more efficient. It gives you a general idea then once you need to find out more information you can go online, so I would cut out some of the details that tell you what the course was"

Gen-Xers Group

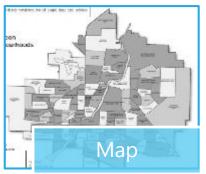
"How many pages is it? ... by the time I find the swimming classes for my grandkids I am confused! So many different lessons so many levels and all the leisure centres. " **Seniors Group**

"I thought this one (detailed red cross section) had a lot of details. I don't know if that was necessary, the dates are important for planning though."

Gen-Xers Group

Community Association Section







"I don't know Saskatoon all that well because I like to hang out in our neighbourhood more so I find it is really nice to have a visual (Map)." **Gen-Xer Group** Some respondents expressed interest in keeping the Community Association section detailed and as is because they enjoy browsing through this section to find out about new activities and explore offerings from other Community Associations.

However, a few respondents who prefer the detailed Community Association section suggested that the detailed information can be made more concise. All they need is the class name, month in which the class starts and the cost.

However, most respondents across groups were not interested in the detailed Community Association section and prefer the list version with contact information, since they already get the details they need through social media and newsletters from their Community Associations. There were suggestions to include emails and types of activities each Community Association offers in the list version of the Community Association section.

Most respondents like the Community Association map and would like to keep it in the printed Guide because it shows them the different locations.

" I use it to find out about classes that I didn't know of." **Millennial Group**

" I get my Community Association information by mail every three months or so." **Millennial Group**

Advertiser Section





Opinion about the Advertiser Section varied across respondents from the three focus groups. While some respondents were genuinely interested in reading the Advertiser section to find new information, others suggested that the Advertiser section should be removed all together.

Among those who browse through advertisements, some prefer the index version, because it is more concise and organized and less wasteful, while others prefer the full advertisements because of the aesthetic appeal and more detailed information.

Some respondents who like to browse through the advertisements stated that they liked it because they can see more community program options.

Most respondents understand and are accepting of the fact that the advertisements are important in order to cover the cost of printing the guide.

" I like how it (ad. index) is broken down to segments, likes that all ads have same format so easy to find info" **Gen-Xers Group**

"I like browsing so I don't mind the ads" **Gen-Xers Group**

"Some of these (detailed full ads) are a little overwhelming" **Gen-Xers Group**



The printed guide acts as a 'trigger' especially, for gen-Xers with kids, prompting them to register for programs online. The City needs to consider alternate 'triggers' for this group before stopping distribution of the guide to all Saskatoon households.

Suggested alternative triggers

Emails (from 'City of Saskatoon' to get opened) Calendar sync Postcard or flyer mailed to homes Mobile notifications Posters/Signs in public libraries and Leisure Centres City of Saskatoon Service Alerts Social Media posts RSS feed

Respondents disbelieved the claim that mailing one page, like a postcard or flyer, would cost the City same as printing and distributing the full Leisure Guide.

Q Online Sources Suggestions

Online Search simulation: Respondents were asked to use online methods to find City of Saskatoon leisure information during the focus groups. Respondents were also asked to evaluate their experience in the process and give any relevant suggestions about the current online version of the Guide

The meaning of "Online"

Respondents in the focus groups (especially the gen-Xers) were not consistent about what they meant by 'online'



The majority referred to the drop-in site or registration page



Some also mentioned the **PDF Leisure Guide**, however not everyone was aware that a PDF Guide existed

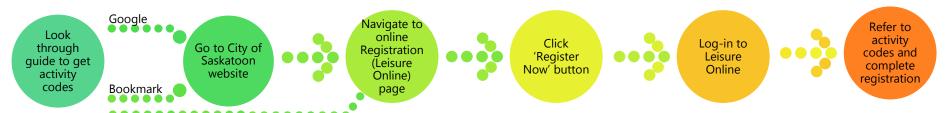
Typical Pathways (as demonstrated by respondents during the groups)

"I find that (registering) is very stressful and then you can feel like you failed as a parent" Gen-Xers Focus Group

"If all of this is going online, that process needs to be more user-friendly for people like me who find it frustrating not to be able to get to that page guickly" **Seniors Focus Group**

Registration

The typical registration pathway has several steps. Some participants would like the process to be more streamlined to make it easier and faster.



Drop-Ins

Millennials are mostly interested in drop-ins and they were unsatisfied with the steps it takes to reach the drop-in page and the filtering options available. They would prefer something more streamlined with more advanced searching options.







Suggestions for the Website or Mobile App

Respondents across all groups, including the 55+ age group were receptive to having a mobile app for accessing City of Saskatoon leisure information. Majority also felt that the current website needed streamlining.

- 1 User friendly and intuitive
- 2 Create one integrated landing page for leisure activities with a simple menu that links to drop-ins, registration and other information
- Allow for opt-in for email reminder or mobile notification as well as an option for syncing with calendars
- 4 Easy to find activity code in the registration page. Not having to refer back to the printed/PDF guide
- Advanced filters (by activity type, age group, location, preferred time)
- 6 Generate a custom program (using filters to show several activities of interest at the same time)
- 7 Include information about Community Association activities online
- Present the PDF information in a more dynamic and interactive format that allows for highlighting and bookmarking
- 9 View information to register without having to log-in
- 10 Improved readability Having higher color contrast, larger font, bigger button and less squeezed text

"you can check what you are interested and then it would recommend what you can sign up"

-Millennials Group

"It will get you to the right place quicker. You could say, '8 year old swimming on Friday' and it could tell you what your options are"

-Seniors Group



Way Forward

Way Forward

The group with the most interest in the printed guide are the **gen-Xers**, mainly because they are under tremendous pressure to register their children for classes. They expressed willingness to adapt to the phase-out of the printed guide. However, they suggested that there needs to be improvements to the current online information sources to make the transition easy and not having to miss out on any important information. The printed guide also acts as a 'trigger' for this group prompting them to register for programs online. The City needs to consider alternate 'triggers' for this group before stopping distribution of the guide to all Saskatoon households.

As for the **millennials** and **seniors**, they are less worried about program registration deadlines and do not feel the same guilt and pressure that gen-Xers, who have children, tend to experience. Most of them, especially the seniors welcomed the idea of phasing out the printed guide.

Phase-out suggestions:

- Printed guide
 - Distribution → The majority support discontinuing home delivery and having the printed guide available at the Leisure Centres & libraries. This concept was also supported by 70% of Saskatoon residents based on the quantitative Leisure Guide survey results. Some gen-Xers who are attached to the printed guide suggest an opt-in option to receive the guide at home.
 - Format → The majority support a concise version of the guide (74% support 2017 Leisure Guide Survey), except some gen-Xers with children, who are worried about not finding all the information they need online

"You can get rid of it (the printed guide home delivery) if I know I can access it somewhere else or pick it up from the Leisure Centre."

Gen-Xers Group

"If I can go online and print it, I don't see what is the difference."

Seniors Group

Way-forward

Phase- out suggestions:

Online improvements

- A revamp of the website to be more informative and user-friendly. There were suggestions about integrating all online pages like Drop-in Online, Leisure Online, etc.
- A Mobile App
- A detailed usability testing is recommended after revamping the online website and developing an app to ensure that the needs of target audience are met

Trigger

Setting up alternative reminders for registration is crucial. Some of the suggested ideas include: emails, calendar sync, post card or flyer via mail, mobile notifications, RSS feed, Social Media posts, City of Saskatoon Service Alerts and posters in Leisure Centres and public libraries.