



Improvement Strategy

Final Report - March 2014



Junc-tion (j ngk sh n) n.

1. The act or process of joining or the condition of being joined.
2. A place where two things join or meet, especially a place where two roads or railway routes come together and one terminates.
3. A transition layer or boundary between two different materials or between physically different regions in a single material.





THE
JUNCTION

The logo for 'THE JUNCTION' features a stylized graphic of three human figures in red, orange, and black, arranged in a circle. The word 'THE' is in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font, and 'JUNCTION' is in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font with a black outline, set against a black background.

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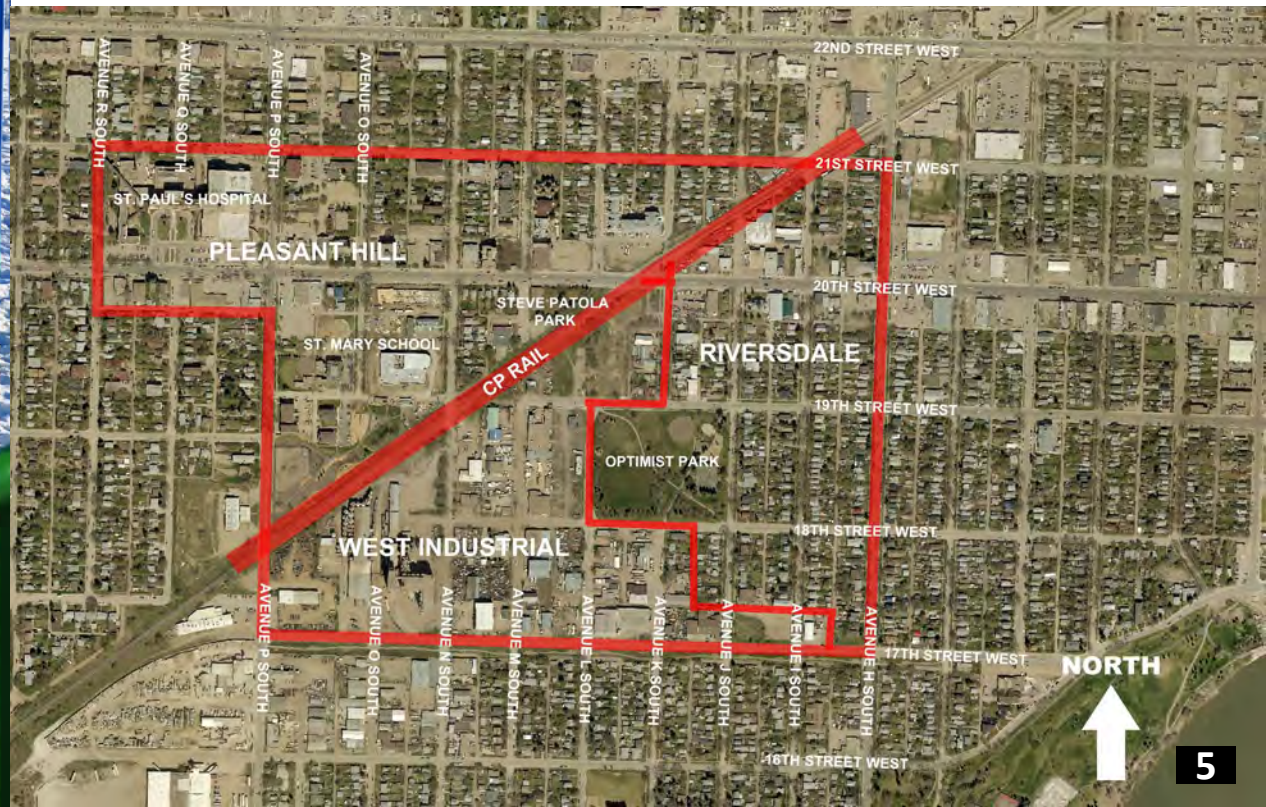


The Junction Study

The Junction is located at the cross section of three Saskatoon neighbourhoods: Pleasant Hill, Riversdale, and West Industrial, and separated by the CP Rail line. The Study Area is bounded by 21st Street to the north, Avenue H to the east, 17th Street to the south, and Avenues P and R to the west. The area's proximity to larger redevelopment projects such as Pleasant Hill Village, Monarch Yards, Station 20 West, and increased interest by the private sector for redevelopment is triggering the need for a comprehensive Improvement Strategy for the area.

Purpose

The purpose of the Junction Improvement Strategy is to link together redevelopment projects in the three neighbourhoods by recommending public realm improvements, identifying future uses for vacant/contaminated lands, increasing investor confidence, and to develop specific recommendations for improvements within the area.

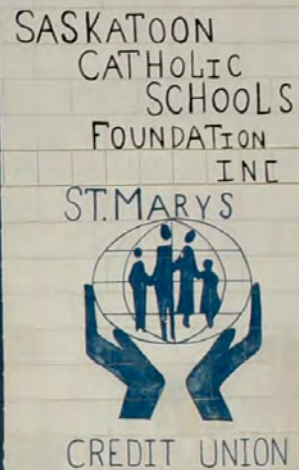


Special Thanks

Riversdale Business Improvement District
Saskatoon Tribal Council
Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op
Riversdale Community Association
St . Paul's Hospital
KC Charities
St. Mary's Wellness & Education Centre
Pleasant Hill Community School
Princess Alexandra School
La Troupe du Jour

Station 20 West
Shercom Industries
Atlas Industries
Pleasant Hill Community Association
Shamrock Seeds Ltd.
Three Sisters Bakery
AODBT Architecture + Interior Design Ltd.
Quint Development
Ukrainian Sisters of St. Joseph of Saskatoon
Saskatoon Housing Authority

20th Street Saskatoon Library
Saskatoon Police Service
Saskatoon Fire Department
CHEP Good Food Inc.
Luna Metals
Unified Minds
Columbian Place
The Junction Steering Committee



Introduction and Vision

The Junction area is in transition. At the intersection of three historic Saskatoon neighbourhoods, it offers a unique blend of residential, commercial and industrial lands with strong linkages to the City Centre and riverbank. It has an active street life, greenspace, and services within a short walking distance. Culture and attitudes are changing within The Junction, as investor confidence increases and development occurs at an accelerated rate. Residents of The Junction view the people as the ‘gems’ of their neighbourhood. The Junction continues to evolve with an influx of newcomers, and people who live and work here have an unwavering enthusiasm for the area that has been constant through challenging times. By combining a new concept for the area with specific recommendations, The Junction Improvement Strategy will help work towards accomplishing the City of Saskatoon’s Strategic Goals - specifically related to the Goals of *Moving Around, Quality of Life, Environmental Leadership, and Economic Diversity & Prosperity*.

Today and into the future, the fundamental challenge for the area is to blend all the elements that make it unique without major displacement. The Junction Improvement Strategy seeks to build on the momentum already started and looks for creative connections where possible. When fully realized, The Junction area will be a shining example of a truly complete community.





Background

Between 2002 and 2008, three neighbourhood plans were adopted through the Local Area Planning process, which focused on various improvements for each particular neighbourhood. The main themes of each Local Area Plan (LAP) were as follows:

- **Pleasant Hill (2002):** Improving safety and reversing the effects of socio-economic decline.
- **West Industrial (2004):** Formalizing the historic industrial area by improving traffic flow and infrastructure, recognizing its future desirability once a south bridge is built.
- **Riversdale (2008):** Renewal of the historical 20th Street business district and larger improvements near the river.

The Junction Improvement Strategy is not intended to replace the LAPs, but rather update and connect them together in response to recent investments and changes in the area.

Two background documents were created in preparation for The Junction Improvement Strategy, both of which are available at www.saskatoon.ca/go/thejunction:

The Junction Public Engagement Results Summary Report: Public consultation and public activity research was completed in 2012, and included extensive pedestrian and cyclist counts in the area. The goal of public engagement was to take participants through an interactive process to explore and better understand their perceptions regarding The Junction and to gauge what they value and think is important to integrate into a long-term strategy for the area. **Appendix 2** (page 26) provides a brief summary of the Public Engagement Results Summary Report.

The Junction Background Report provides detailed information and analysis of the area, and was utilized extensively in the preparation of the Improvement Strategy. Topics covered include demographics, land use, parks, infrastructure, transportation, and environmental concerns.



Executive Summary

The recommendations of The Junction Improvement Strategy involve nine key strategies:

- 1 - Public Amenity and Design:** Improve the public realm by providing street furniture, creation of a Public Amenity Program, ensuring pedestrian safety, and mitigating railway influence.
- 2 - Private Property Maintenance and Responsibility:** Promote property maintenance through owner-oriented strategies.
- 3 - Completing the Corridor, Connecting Communities and Destinations:** Complete the Safety Pathway and improve linkages, wayfinding, and transit.
- 4 - Environmental Leadership:** Investigate remediation of vacant sites and feasibility of producing renewable energy.
- 5 - Arts, Heritage, and Education:** Celebrate the history of the area through heritage preservation and programming.
- 6 - Health, Recreation and Parks:** Improve leisure access and park improvements.
- 7 - Land Use and Transition:** Create appropriate transitions between land uses; transition from industrial to mixed uses and review zoning on 20th Street.
- 8 - Strategic Growth:** Decrease vacant lots and promote housing ownership and renewal.
- 9 - Entrepreneurship and Creative Industries:** Create a cluster of entrepreneurial and innovative activity.

Within each of the nine strategic areas, specific recommendations have been created to help achieve these goals. The Junction recommendations are intended to facilitate immediate improvements and to continue the successful transformation of the area, and each is assigned to a specific City of Saskatoon Department or division. **The Junction Priority List** (page 24), reflects which recommendations are a priority for the community, and as such the priority list will support and guide implementation of the Strategy.

The Junction Concept Overview

- A. Transition Zone:** The Transition Zone (see map on page 11) is the area bordered by 17th Street & the CP Rail tracks and Avenues N & P. In the Transition Zone, re-use of existing industrial properties should occur as they become available, transitioning the area from heavy industrial to uses more complementary with the surrounding neighbourhoods. Where feasible, large buildings should be re-used to showcase environmental and sustainability benefits.
- B. Industry and Artistry:** By marketing and promoting The Junction as a destination for entrepreneurs and creative industries, a unique and vibrant business area will result. This part of The Junction should provide a mix of employment - public consultation revealed that non-disruptive, light industrial uses in the area are important for providing varied and higher-wage job opportunities, which aligns with the City's Strategic Goal of Economic Diversity and Prosperity. It is important to note that this district would target businesses that use artistic talents - such as furniture-building and creative industries for example.
- C. Cultural Branding, History and Heritage:** The unique heritage of The Junction should be promoted, conserved and retained by recognizing heritage properties and historic Churches in the area, but also through the installation of historical markers and public events. Due to the concentration of Ukrainian cultural elements at Avenue M and 20th Street, there is potential to create Saskatoon's first Heritage Conservation District. Other cultures on 20th Street, both historical and current, should be formally recognized and promoted.
- D. The Green Square:** This area, bordered by 19th & 20th Streets and Avenues K & M, contains large pieces of vacant and contaminated land. It has the potential to produce renewable energy while land is reclaimed. Public consultation confirmed the importance of starting remediation on these vacant lots so that they can be reused and developed for the benefit of the community. As contaminated lands become available in the Green Square, a solar energy park could be constructed on the site while in-situ remediation is performed - a concept that has been implemented elsewhere. Once reclaimed, these sites should be given consideration to help address leisure needs in the core neighbourhoods.
- E. Growth / Renewal:** This concept area of The Junction has the potential to transform into a vibrant pedestrian area with rejuvenated housing. In the long-term, this area should serve as a transition, with higher-density properties closer to 20th Street transitioning to single-family dwellings towards 19th Street. In addition, area stakeholders have identified home ownership as a priority and that affordable housing should occur in a more balanced and less concentrated manner in this area and throughout The Junction.

The Improvement Strategy also recommends broader improvements throughout The Junction in the following areas:

Connectivity - Connectivity is an important aspect of the Strategy for The Junction – specifically connecting the area to both the City Centre and other neighbourhoods. The overriding concern from stakeholders is in regards to the safety of people crossing busy corridor streets such as 20th Street to access new developments (including schools and seniors centres) in the area. The other major obstacle in terms of connectivity and pedestrian corridors is with the CP rail line that bisects the area. Pedestrians and cyclists routinely cross these tracks without the assistance of defined crossings and often use the rail line as a path - as such, completion of the Safety Pathway is a key priority.

20th Street Commercial Corridor and Design - Good design can mitigate an unwelcoming urban environment. Currently, The Junction has a lack of urban design street enhancements and feels disjointed with the intersection of the rail line. Pedestrian improvements, including planters, benches, street trees and other amenities will enhance the area further by raising its level of aesthetic. On 20th Street, from Avenue H to Avenue P, pedestrian improvements will create a welcoming environment. An emphasis on improving safety at key intersections is a priority.

Health, Recreation and Parks - A recurring theme identified during public consultation was demand exceeding supply of leisure and recreation opportunities in the area, and the desire for a leisure centre nearby. Opportunities for enhancing Optimist Park were also identified.

THE JUNCTION CONCEPT



The Junction Recommendations

Public input is the foundation of The Junction Improvement Strategy and recommendations. The recommendations for The Junction were determined from extensive public consultation, previous Local Area Plans, and pedestrian/cyclist data collection. The recommendations in The Junction Improvement Strategy relate to the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Goals of Moving Around, Quality of Life, Environmental Leadership, and Economic Diversity & Prosperity.

The Junction Priority List (Appendix 1, Page 24) lists recommendations that community stakeholders view as most important based on an exercise conducted at the Open House; this List will help prioritize implementation. A priority plan of the recommendations will be developed in conjunction with key stakeholders, and community consultation will be an important part of implementation.

1. Public Amenity and Design

PEDESTRIAN-FOCUSED STREETSCAPING

Providing pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture, public art and banners at major intersections and along key streets will help to entice private investment, while improving connectivity and quality of life in The Junction. As such, it is recommended that Planning & Development (Urban Design) examine opportunities to provide pedestrian amenities in the short-term, and locations have been proposed based on data from The Junction Public Activity Studies.

Pedestrian amenities are intended to be installed in the short term while primary streetscape improvements will continue to be focused on 20th Street West from Idylwyld to Avenue H, in line with the 20th Street West Streetscape Master Plan. In addition, the Parks division should examine strategies for increasing the tree canopy in residential and industrial areas of The Junction, both on public and private property in the short-term. Over the long term, enhanced streetscaping will be added in other locations as resources allow for them. In addition to streetscape improvements, regular street sweeping and sidewalk repair should occur in The Junction.

Once a streetscape design is prepared, Planning & Development (Urban Design) should examine ways and opportunities to engage the community in revitalization efforts. For example, these could include art banner competitions and relying on youth employment groups to build public furniture for the area.

Lastly, as reinvestment in the area is leaning towards showcasing "green" design, streetscaping improvements should integrate environmentally sensitive design where possible. For example, bioswale retention planters and art projects using recycled materials have been suggested.



“A crosswalk in front of Station 20 West is urgently needed.”

- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013



Laguna Beach, California

Other cities have placed “Drains to Ocean” art signs on sidewalks over storm sewers as a design feature and to promote pollution awareness. A similar “Drains to River” program, with designs by local groups and artists, could begin in The Junction as part of a Public Amenity Program.

Good urban design is a key component in the City of Saskatoon’s broader Growth Plan to 500,000, and the City of Saskatoon will need to assess new ways of funding urban design projects within the City in a timely fashion. Installations such as benches, banners, and art placement can improve the public realm in The Junction immediately; while complete streetscaping treatment will follow as resources become available. This method will allow improvements to important corridors - such as 19th Street and Avenue H - in addition to 20th Street. The areas highlighted in **yellow** on the Concept Map should begin in the short term.

PUBLIC AMENITY PROGRAM

In addition to streetscaping, a Public Amenity Program can also improve the look and feel of an area. The intent of such a program would be for public groups to display and promote creative items and initiatives, specifically by allowing community stakeholders to engage and invest in the community by facilitating furniture placement, street painting, murals, banner competitions, and event creation while keeping with the broader mandate for improving public spaces in the city. Previously, the Riversdale LAP recommended the creation of a heritage committee; a Public Amenity Program, with a larger public component may be more applicable for The Junction.

It is recommended:

- 1.1** That by 2017, the Planning & Development (Urban Design) and Community Development divisions - In consultation with the Riversdale Business Improvement District and property owners - develop a plan for streetscape improvements such as banners, garbage receptacles, shelters/benches, and art placement to be installed throughout The Junction.
- 1.2** That the Planning & Development (Urban Design) and Community Development divisions, in conjunction with community stakeholders, consider the creation of a new Public Amenity Program for The Junction within the next three years.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND INCREASED WALKABILITY

Pedestrian safety improvements should be a priority to ensure safe linkages throughout the area, specifically in school corridor areas. Stakeholders have identified speeding on 19th Street as a concern, and this issue should continue to be monitored by the Saskatoon Police Service. Safe pedestrian crossings are also important in the vicinity of Station 20 West, which serves as a major community focal point. Improvements to crossings could include on-street painting, pedestrian actuated lights, corner bulbing, flower pots, or narrowing the roadway for pedestrians and increasing their visibility to drivers.

- 1.3** That Transportation and Planning & Development (Urban Design) divisions develop a plan to improve pedestrian safety at:
 - a. Avenue H at 17th and 19th Streets;
 - b. Avenue N at 19th Street, with improvements extending beyond the CP Rail crossing;
 - c. 20th Street West at Avenue H, N, and P; and 20th Street between Avenue K and L at the CP Rail crossing; and
 - d. Avenue P from 17th to 19th Street West.

MITIGATE RAILWAY INFLUENCE

The railway crossing on 20th Street creates a visual and physical barrier for pedestrians, and the visual gap is further exacerbated by flanking vacant sites. Federal guidelines dictate railway crossing design for safety reasons; however, efforts should be made to lessen the visual dominance of the railway crossing and increase the comfort of pedestrians. In addition, a rail under/overpass at 20th Street would further reduce railway influence and decrease travel times to St. Paul's Hospital. In the short term, pedestrian comfort can be improved through:

- street painting,
- adjacent art and furniture placement, and
- development on vacant lots.

“Property owners should be more responsible for their properties.”
- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013



2. Private Property Maintenance and Responsibility

PRIVATE PROPERTY CLEAN UPS - IMPROVING THE PRIVATE REALM

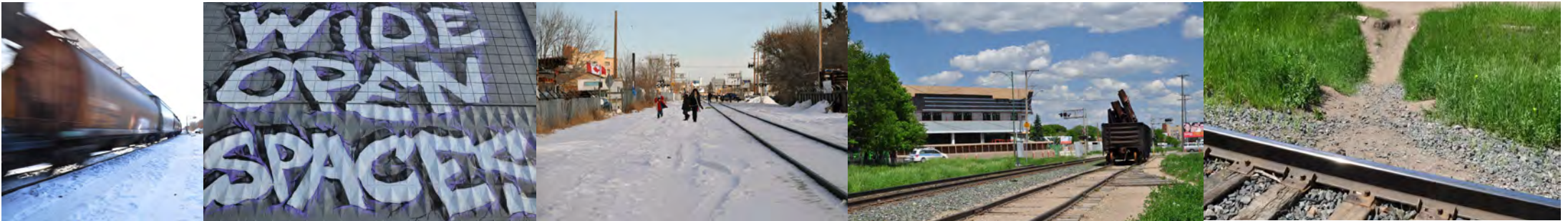
Maintenance of private property benefits all stakeholders in The Junction. Formally encouraging the removal or replacement of dilapidated accessory buildings on private property ties into the larger strategy of renewal and revitalization. The Saskatoon Fire Department (Fire) has completed an inventory of older, run down and dilapidated buildings and fences within Riversdale, outside of The Junction. A total of 128 properties were catalogued and placed into 4 categories based on property condition: Aesthetic (39%), Maintenance (23%), Obsolete (22%), and Health and Safety (16%). Fire has completed enforcement on the majority of Health and Safety files. Such an inventory initiative in The Junction would assist with improving private property maintenance. Fire should continue to increase property maintenance enforcement in the area, and consider changes to the Property Maintenance Bylaw to allow more effective enforcement, regardless of the surrounding neighbourhood standard. Other initiatives include organized back lane tree maintenance (as done in Nutana in 2012), with the goal of improving appearance, reducing the opportunity for crime to occur, and improving perceptions of safety.

- 2.1** That Planning & Development establish an owner-oriented strategy to address the problem of dilapidated and run-down properties, accessory buildings and fences in The Junction (including the commercial area) and surrounding neighbourhoods.
- 2.2** That the Saskatoon Fire Department organize a coordinated property maintenance sweep of The Junction and surrounding areas, and consider other initiatives to increase maintenance by property owners and reduce opportunities for vandalism to occur.
- 2.3** That Planning & Development organize a back lane tree maintenance initiative in The Junction by 2016.

3. Completing the Corridor, Connecting Communities and Destinations

SAFETY PATHWAY

The Safety Pathway is a paved pedestrian/cyclist path that allows safe travel along the CP rail line. Completion of the Safety Pathway (formerly 'Rails with Trails') is crucial to promote walkability, increase mobility, improve safety and to connect The Junction with other areas of the city. Once the entire Safety Pathway (from North Downtown to Avenue W) is completed, this will provide a direct, safe connection to the downtown and destinations in between. It will also improve the general aesthetic of the railway line as it passes through the surrounding neighbourhoods, and good design will be a key component of the Pathway's success. In addition, businesses may be interested in sponsoring parts of the project, due to its direct positive impact on the connectivity and quality of life in surrounding neighbourhoods.



"The Safety Pathway is a big priority for us who go everywhere by bike."

- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013

To reduce inventory and maintenance costs, furniture such as benches and garbage receptacles along the Safety Pathway should be kept the same style as those used on the 20th Street West Streetscaping project. This will also create a continuous theme from 20th Street West to the Safety Pathway, improve connectivity, and encourage use of the Pathway.

3.1 That the Planning & Development and Transportation divisions support the Capital Project for the design and construction of the Safety Pathway, and explore corporate/private funding opportunities for this project. In addition, a more applicable and relevant name (other than Safety Pathway) should be given to the project before completion.

LINKAGES AND NODES

Pedestrian and cyclist counts in The Junction revealed the importance of walking and cycling to area residents and stakeholders. As an active pedestrian and cycling environment, movement networks are already very entrenched in the area. Strengthening the connection between The Junction and other areas is crucial to the growth and transformation of the area. With its proximity to downtown, River Landing, and the Farmer's Market, 19th Street should provide a pedestrian and cyclist connection from The Junction to these areas. This would draw visitors from River Landing to 20th Street's unique retail and business areas; as well as improving the connection to St. Mary's Wellness & Education Centre and recreation areas.

3.2 That the Transportation division examine enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities on 19th Street and review pedestrian crossings in The Junction as part of an area-wide study for safety, to enhance connectivity and encourage moving around.

3.3 That the Planning & Development and Transportation divisions conduct a comprehensive pedestrian and cyclist count in The Junction every five years, beginning in 2016.

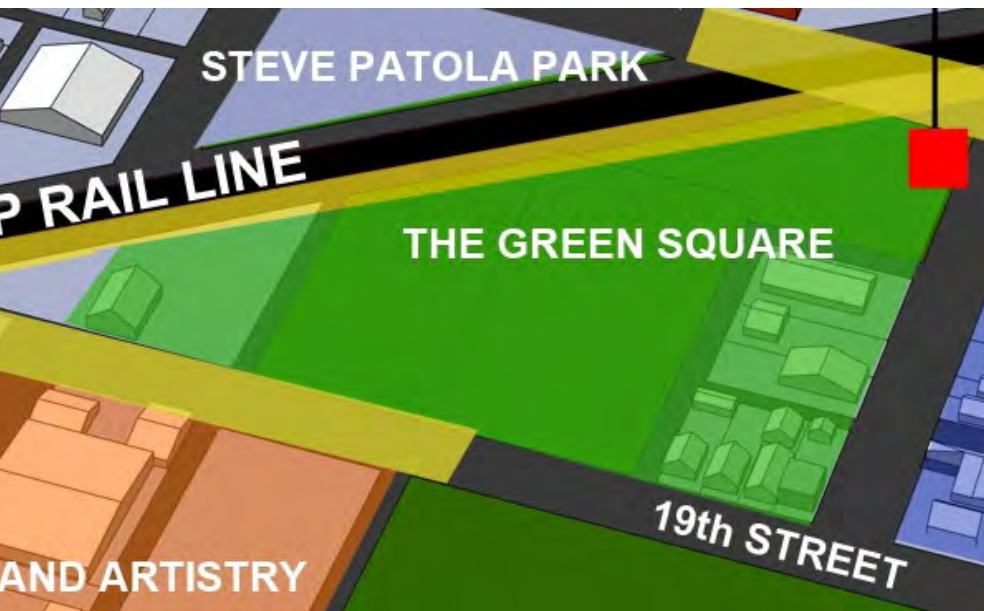
WAYFINDING

To encourage new visitors to shop and play in Riversdale, River Landing and The Junction, appropriate signage and navigational tools should be created to entice visitors beyond Avenues A-C. By branding and marketing the area's special attractions through on-street maps and store directories (similar to those used in malls), and the use of technology (QR codes, for example), new visitors will feel more comfortable proceeding throughout the area knowing the attractions available to them. With offerings like the Ukrainian Museum, La Troupe du Jour, Sask Native Theatre, and many retail offerings, new shoppers will be more inclined to explore the area beyond the first few blocks of 20th Street West.

3.4 That, by 2016, the Riversdale Business Improvement District and Planning & Development (Urban Design), create an on-street attraction and store directory map to be placed on local poster boards, including placement in River Landing and the Farmer's Market.

TRANSIT

The Junction area has strong transit ridership rates along main corridors such as 20th Street; however, stakeholder comments noted that further transit improvements could be examined. As an employment area within the City, enhanced bus service and amenities, such as benches and shelters, would be beneficial in the southwest portion of The Junction. As such, improvements to transit service and amenities should occur over the long-term, in conjunction with increased redevelopment in the area, the Growing Forward! Shaping Saskatoon process, and implementation of The Junction Improvement Strategy recommendations. Consultation with business owners should occur prior to the placement of new bus shelters and benches in front of their location.



4. Environmental Leadership

INNOVATIVE REMEDIATION

The Green Square is the vacant land south of the CP Rail line, bordered by 19th & 20th Streets and Avenues K & M. These sites have the potential to showcase renewable energy and land reclamation. Previous environmental testing has shown underground contamination at the vacant city-owned property at 1202 19th Street West. The city-owned site and the neighbouring privately owned sites (1112 19th Street West and 301 Ave K South) hold potential for re-use as a community focal point, as identified by stakeholders.

As these vacant, contaminated lands become available in the **Green Square**, a solar energy park could be constructed on the site while in-situ remediation is performed. In other words, technology exists where soil can be decontaminated without digging up and disturbing the soil – thus allowing the installation of solar panels during this process. Such a demonstration project increases the City's energy from alternative sources and will cover some of the cost of decontamination. Once decontamination is complete, the solar panels would be removed and the land would be available for re-use.

“Green spaces, trees, and reclamation should be a priority.”

- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013

4.1 That, by 2015, Environmental & Corporate Initiatives and Planning & Development divisions report back on enhanced measures to deal with vacant/contaminated sites identified for future land use changes in The Junction.

4.2 That, by 2015, Environmental & Corporate Initiatives and Saskatoon Light & Power review the financial feasibility of combining a community renewable energy program in conjunction with site decontamination at 1202 19th Street West as a demonstration project.

With the availability of new remediation techniques, green energy sources, recycled building materials, and urban agriculture, The Junction could be positioned to facilitate new environmental learning opportunities and innovations; and new streetscape initiatives could make extensive use of green features and design. Partnerships with educational institutions would enhance potential research and innovations in this area, while increasing the area's profile in the city.

4.3 That Environmental & Corporate Initiatives investigate opportunities and explore partnerships for the creation of an environmental education program, to promote and foster adult and youth learning opportunities such as workshops and outdoor classrooms.



5. Arts, Heritage and Education

HERITAGE

In line with the City of Saskatoon Culture Plan, the unique heritage of The Junction should be promoted, conserved and retained. This includes recognizing heritage through built form, such as the St. Paul's nurse's residences and historic churches in the area, but also through storytelling, such as the installation of historical markers, and hosting public events. As an example, due to the concentration of Ukrainian cultural elements at Avenue M and 20th Street, there is potential to create a point of interest with a cohesive name and branding. Other cities, such as Regina, have created Heritage Conservation Districts, with the objectives of promoting and preserving heritage and character, and ensures new development is compatible with the established heritage character.

To add interest along 20th Street for pedestrians, historical markers/plaques should be placed at appropriate locations, for instance, a marker could be placed at 1002 20th St W (northwest corner of Ave J and 20th) noting the original site of the first Riversdale Library, which opened in 1954. Other potential locations include Avenue M and 20th Street and the old Imperial Oil site. In addition, bricks from the "Brick and Co Company" factory which stood at 1202 19th Street should be reused in historical markers for that property.

"This area is rich in culture and history, and it needs to be celebrated."

- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013



5.1 That Planning & Development consider the creation of a Heritage Conservation District in The Junction; and that the Community Development Arts and Culture Consultant and Planning & Development Heritage Planner work with the Riversdale BID and Urban Design to discuss installation of historical markers in The Junction.

The Library on 20th has been a welcome addition to the area. The Library is important for young families in the area, and during public consultation it was noted that an expansion of programming at the Library, especially programs related to literacy, would be beneficial.


5.2 That the Saskatoon Public Library, Library on 20th, explore additional programs that target young families and have a focus on literacy.

6. Health, Recreation and Parks

LEISURE AND RECREATION

A recurring suggestion during public consultation was a need for increased leisure opportunities and the desire for a City-operated leisure centre. Facilities such as the White Buffalo Youth Lodge currently serve the area, and its facilities include a gym, fitness equipment and a daycare. Although non-profit organizations are providing recreational programs in the area, public input noted that demand for leisure exceeds supply, and numerous stakeholders identified a City-operated leisure centre as a high priority for the area. It is important to note that initial public consultation occurred prior to the opening of St. Mary's Wellness & Education Centre, which would have filled some of the demand; however, this would not address larger leisure and recreation needs in city centre area neighbourhoods. Consultation done after the opening of St. Mary's confirmed a new leisure centre in the city centre area would greatly benefit youth in the area. Since walking is a primary means of transportation for some area stakeholders, a new leisure facility in the core neighbourhoods should be easily accessed by pedestrians.

6.1 That the Community Services Department explore the potential for a new leisure centre, including the use of partnerships, within reasonable walking distance of The Junction. Consideration should be given to the vacant lots in the Green Square, along 20th Street and Avenue K.



"The core needs and deserves a fully outfitted recreation centre...Shaw Centre, Cosmo, and Harry Bailey are too far away."

- Stakeholder Comment, Open House 2013

OPTIMIST PARK

During public consultation, comments were received about the condition of facilities in Optimist Park. For example, the current recreation unit and paddling pool are aging and in need of replacement. In addition, local stakeholders would like to see winter activities in the park to facilitate its use year-round - options mentioned include increasing the size of the toboggan hill or cross-country ski trails.

6.2 That the Recreation & Sport and Community Development divisions explore options to enhance Optimist Park, such as replacement of the recreation unit and paddling pool; and examine initiatives to increase use of the park year-round.



The Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan recommended that Steve Patola Park be returned to public use after the expiration of the exclusive lease in 2029, or earlier should it no longer be required by the St. George Seniors Club. However, consultation with the Seniors Club revealed a strong desire to keep the park in the hands of the group for the foreseeable future - as such, the long-term (post-2029) use, objective, and ownership of the Park should be clarified.

6.3 That, by 2015, the Planning & Development and Real Estate divisions meet with the St. George's Seniors Club to review and determine the long-term use, objective, and ownership of Steve Patola Park.

URBAN AGRICULTURE

During public consultation, numerous stakeholders expressed a desire for increased community garden space and urban agriculture. Additional community gardens can make an area more attractive, engage area residents, and provide access to healthy food. Initiatives such as urban agriculture, community gardens, and increasing access to high quality food creates healthy communities while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adding to the aesthetic of an area. In addition, this provides the added benefits of community pride, fostering relationships, and synergy with Station 20 West. Strategies to improve food security and urban growing practices should be considered in redevelopment projects within The Junction.

6.4 That The Junction Public Amenity Program, CHEP Good Food Inc, and Community Development consider expanding urban agriculture in The Junction, through initiatives such as community greenhouses, rooftop gardens, and raised planters. In addition, that Planning & Development create an implementation plan to review and integrate recommendations to improve food security and sustainability into broader policy documents (including the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw) once the Saskatoon Regional Food System Assessment is complete.

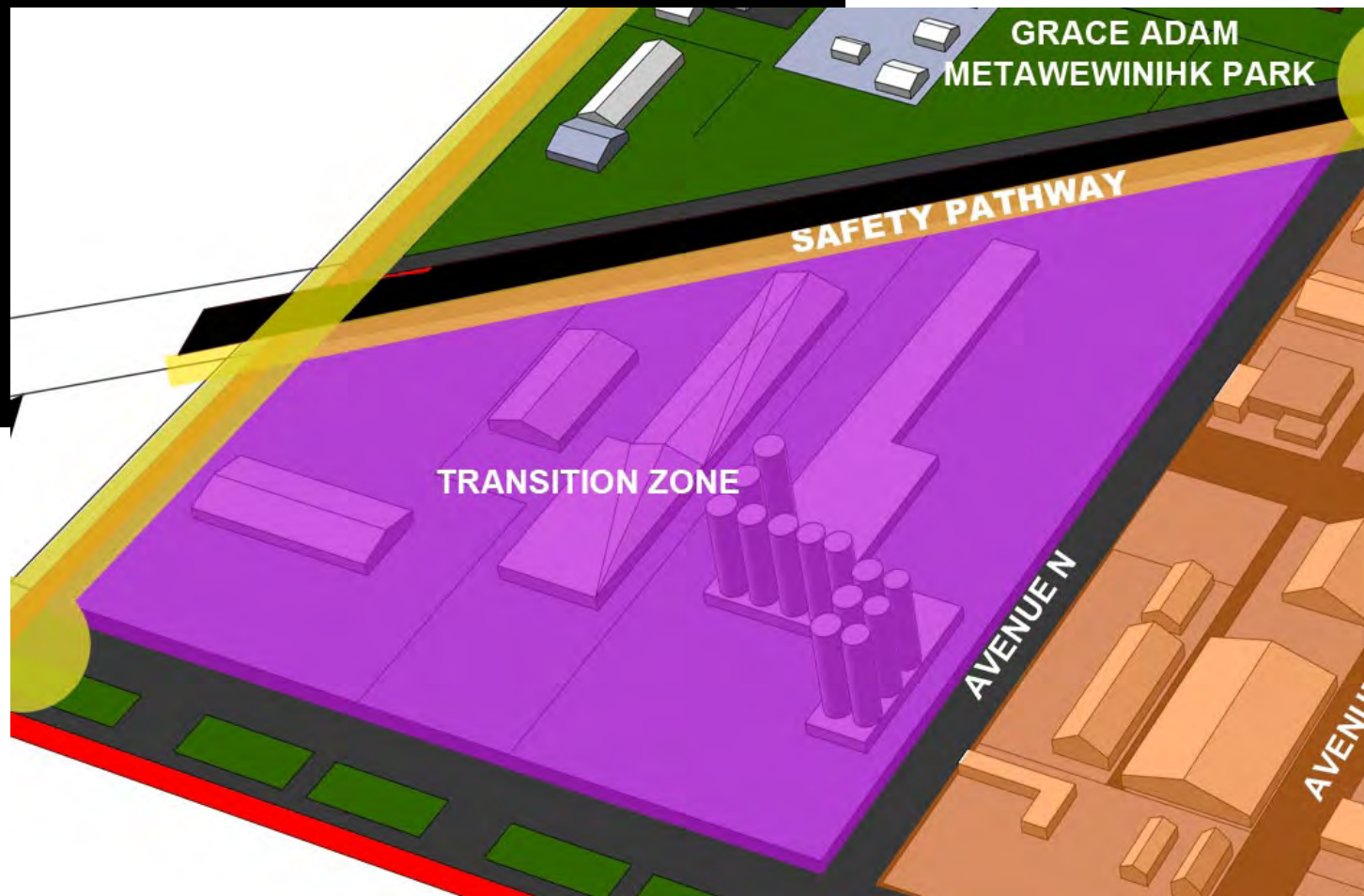
7. Land Use and Transition

INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION

The **Transition Zone** is the area bordered by 17th Street & the CP Rail tracks and Avenues N & P. Over the long-term, re-use of existing industrial properties should occur as they become available, transitioning the area from heavy industrial to uses more complementary to the surrounding neighbourhoods. Where feasible, large buildings should be re-used to showcase environmental and sustainability benefits. For example, large grain silos have been re-used around the world – thus promoting sustainability by saving such structures from demolition and the landfill. By exploring land swap and relocation options with heavy industrial users, the industrial transition process can be expedited. The majority of stakeholders involved in public consultation agreed that heavy industrial uses should not be in close proximity to residential areas.

7.1 That Planning and Development, in consultation with property owners, consider rezoning properties currently zoned heavy industrial to light industrial in The Junction in conjunction with land use and/or ownership changes.

7.2 That Planning and Development, in consultation with property owners, consider rezoning properties in the southeast corner of the Green Square (300 block of Ave K South) from IL1 (Light Industrial) to MX1 (Mixed-Use).



20TH STREET PRIORITY

20th Street is a hub of activity in The Junction, and reducing vacant sites will create a more pedestrian-friendly and cohesive form. Large vacant sites are acting as barriers to complete the street; and mixed-use commercial, office and housing should replace single family homes, underutilized single storey uses, and industrial storage sites on 20th Street.

After the release of the Riversdale Business Improvement District's Strategic Plan, a review of the B5 zoning on 20th Street should be undertaken to ensure that this zoning ensures the continued success of the commercial area and ensures desired uses are locating on the street - specifically that commercial and retail uses are promoted. Considerations should include provisions for a minimum height standard, retail at grade requirement, and creation of design guidelines.

7.3 That Planning & Development review the use of B5 zoning on 20th Street; specifically to ensure the commercial area remains vibrant, a pedestrian oriented street is maintained, and gradual densification occurs.

8. Strategic Growth

GRADUAL DENSIFICATION

The **Growth / Renewal** concept area of The Junction has the potential to transform into a vibrant pedestrian area with rejuvenated housing, specifically when done in conjunction with recommendation 7.3 - ensuring the 20th Street corridor remains vibrant. In the long-term, this area should serve as a transition, with higher-density properties closer to 20th Street transitioning to single-family dwellings towards 19th Street. In order to accomplish slightly higher density and flexibility, the R2 zoning in the majority of this area will have to be changed to accommodate multi-unit buildings.

A recurring recommendation from stakeholders in The Junction is that the City should encourage and promote the development of various housing opportunities of all types – not only affordable. Previous Local Area Plans also identified the need to address the deterioration of housing stock in the area, and the Neighbourhood Level Infill Design Guidelines will help improve residential areas by providing guidance for future individual infill projects within neighbourhoods.



8.1 That Planning & Development review the R2 zoning in the Growth / Renewal area of The Junction, with the goal of increasing density near 20th Street and rejuvenating housing in the area.

“The blessing of this area is you get to meet your neighbours everyday on the street because everyone walks.”

- Stakeholder Meeting, 2012

DECREASE VACANCY

Today, The Junction area includes approximately 62,500 square metres of vacant and underutilized space, with large tracts located along the main corridor of 20th Street. This presents a unique opportunity to transform The Junction into a lively, pedestrian-oriented space. The Vacant Lot & Adaptive Re-Use Incentive Program was created to help address these vacancy issues. While this program provides an incentive to develop vacant lots and buildings, it does not deter or penalize property owners from holding on to vacant lots and buildings. Some other North American cities utilize programs such as vacant lot and building registries, where owners of vacant buildings are required to pay a fee at regular intervals. This recoups costs for the municipality and also provides an incentive to fill the building or develop a vacant site. Under current legislation in Saskatchewan, municipalities cannot apply penalties or surcharges on vacant lots, and as a result, Planning & Development is currently investigating alternate methods and tools to discourage vacant lots.



HOUSING RENEWAL

The City's Housing Business Plan currently focuses on the creation of new attainable units. While this focus is crucial in ensuring housing remains affordable, renewing existing housing stock is not currently included in any housing programs. As such, a market housing renewal strategy would be beneficial. In addition, while stakeholders are supportive of revitalizing the area, it is important to ensure that housing opportunities continue to be available for a wide variety of income levels.

8.2 That Planning & Development examine the potential for a comprehensive market housing renewal strategy, with components that promote renovation of deteriorated housing, increase ownership, and maintain housing options for a variety of income levels.

9. *Entrepreneurship and Creative Industries*

Consultation with youth and Aboriginal groups revealed a unique concern in the area: that the majority of higher-wage employment opportunities are in areas that are difficult to access, such as the North Industrial Area. It can be difficult to access a job in the major industrial areas without a vehicle. The need for balanced growth in the Junction study area will continue to be dependent on improved and varied housing stock and increasing the opportunities for businesses to establish a presence in the area. Employment opportunities for well-paying jobs should be maintained and increased.

Concern was raised about having too many lower-wage retail jobs in The Junction, and that light industrial or manufacturing jobs play a very important role. While heavy industrial uses should be transitioned out of the area, non-disruptive and non-polluting light industrial businesses should be encouraged in certain locations, such as the Transition Zone and Industry and Artistry areas.

9.1 That Planning & Development review zoning in the area to ensure a variety of commercial, light industrial, retail, and institutional uses are permitted in the Transition Zone and Industry and Artistry areas - with the goal of providing more opportunities for better paying jobs and light industries to locate in the area.

Creative industries have been defined as those including advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software, and TV and radio (Howkins, John (2001), *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money From Ideas*). By marketing and promoting The Junction as an area that appeals to creative industries, the transition away from heavy industrial can accelerate. Promoting creative and innovative industries also supports the City's Strategic Goal of Economic Diversity and Prosperity. In recent years, Saskatoon has seen a large number of entrepreneurs and investors coming to the city, and many of these visits are from those looking to expand or relocate to Saskatoon. Promoting The Junction as a place to invest fits well with the long-term development goals of the area.

9.2 That Planning & Development examine the feasibility of providing targeted incentives to encourage the development of creative industries in The Junction.

In consultation with youth and Aboriginal groups, concerns were raised about entrepreneurship - specifically, the lack of business start-up support for these groups. A business incubator in The Junction could help create an environment that facilitates business success and assists entrepreneurs through launch and start-up. While an incubator supports established businesses to grow, initiatives and programs in core areas that raise awareness about the requirements to start a business, especially home-based businesses, would be beneficial and would encourage more youth and Aboriginal people to start businesses.

9.3 That Planning & Development meet with Saskatoon Ideas Inc and local community/cultural organizations to explore the feasibility of a business incubator in The Junction, and explore programs to educate youth, Aboriginal, and immigrant groups about business creation.



Appendix 1: The Junction Priority List

At The Junction Open House, stakeholders were asked to rank the recommendations they feel are a priority - the top eight choices are listed below. The resulting priority list reveals the importance of each for stakeholders, and will be used to influence implementation decisions for The Junction Improvement Strategy.

Top Eight Recommendations

1.1: That by 2017, the Planning & Development (Urban Design) and Community Development divisions - In consultation with the Riversdale Business Improvement District and property owners - develop a plan for streetscape improvements such as banners, garbage receptacles, shelters/benches, and art placement to be installed throughout The Junction.

1.3: That Transportation the Planning & Development (Urban Design) divisions develop a plan to improve pedestrian safety at:

- a. Avenue H at 17th and 19th Streets;
- b. Avenue N at 19th Street, with improvements extending beyond the CP Rail crossing;
- c. 20th Street West at Avenue H, N, and P; and 20th Street between Avenue K and L at the CP Rail crossing; and
- d. Avenue P from 17th to 19th Street West.





Top Eight Recommendations

2.1: That Planning & Development establish an owner-oriented strategy to address the problem of dilapidated and run-down properties, accessory buildings and fences in The Junction (including the commercial area) and surrounding neighbourhoods.

2.2: That the Saskatoon Fire Department organize a coordinated property maintenance sweep of The Junction and surrounding areas, and consider other initiatives to increase maintenance by property owners.

3.1: That the Planning & Development and Transportation divisions support the Capital Project for the design and construction of the Safety Pathway, and explore corporate/private funding opportunities for this project. In addition, a permanent name other than Safety Pathway should be chosen that is more applicable and relevant to this pathway.

6.1: That the Community Services Department explore the potential for a new leisure centre, including the use of partnerships, within reasonable walking distance of The Junction. Consideration should be given to the vacant lots in the Green Square (20th Street and Avenue K).

6.4: That The Junction Public Amenity Program, CHEP Good Food Inc, and Community Development work to expand urban agriculture in The Junction, through initiatives such as community greenhouses, rooftop gardens, and raised planters.

7.1: That Planning and Development, in consultation with property owners, consider rezoning properties currently zoned heavy industrial to light industrial in The Junction in conjunction with land use and/or ownership changes.

Appendix 2: Public Engagement Summary

The following summary is taken from The Junction Public Engagement Results Summary Report, which includes information gathered from three planning sessions and stakeholder meetings, one-on-one interviews, and a public open house. The full report can be found at www.saskatoon.ca/go/thejunction.

Public Engagement Summary

Key stakeholders at the public input sessions would like to see a new strategy for The Junction that accommodates amenities for the growing number of both youth and seniors in this area, recognizes challenges associated with a busy rail line that bisects the neighbourhood, and vacant un-remediated sites contaminated from industrial use a generation ago. Discussion revolved around health and safety, the importance of affordable housing, but also, from some stakeholders, the importance of a strategy that also emphasizes a balance of average priced housing development in the area in order to appeal to a broad cross-section of Saskatoon residents of all income levels. Some stakeholders are concerned that social service agencies are over-represented in Riversdale and Pleasant Hill, and that this will suppress the natural rejuvenation of the area to average levels. They would like to see a new strategy balance the distribution of community outreach agencies in The Junction more proportionately throughout Saskatoon.

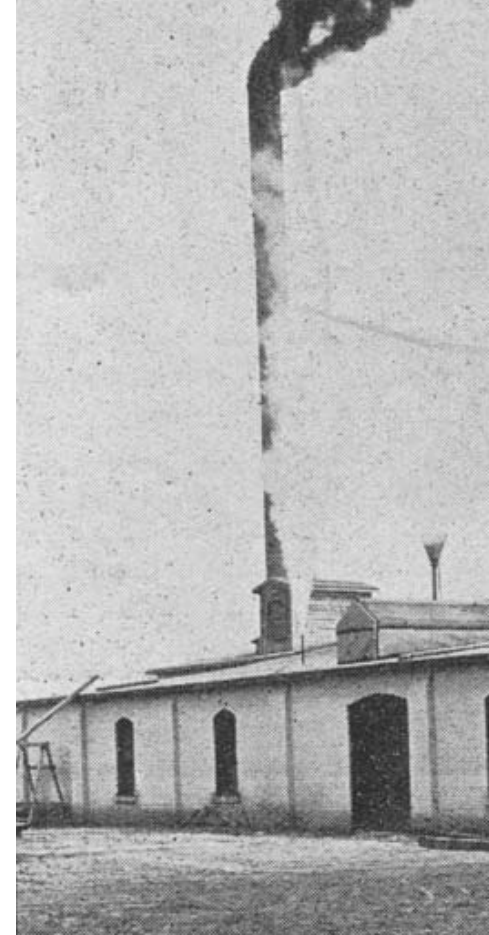
Stakeholders also talked about the challenges associated with the mix of industrial and residential development in the same area, the desire to transition heavy industrial to commercial use over time, and the connectivity challenges both within the area in terms of a lack of safe cross walks and pedestrian corridors, as well as the need for pathways, or a greenbelt, to connect The Junction to the City Centre and other neighbourhoods. The importance of having recreational opportunities in the area was also brought forward, as well as the benefits of a strategy that promotes urban agricultural policies.

Mix of Industrial and Residential Development:

Much of the input from key stakeholders regarding housing development, issues regarding the rail line, and health/safety in The Junction lead to discussion around the importance of a new strategy that recognizes the existing mix of industrial and residential uses in the area. Stakeholders believe the industrial area should be transitioned out of the neighbourhood over a 10-20 year period to give owners adequate time to adapt.

Health and Safety:

A new strategy should include provisions to ensure the health and safety of residents in The Junction community, just as it would in any community in Saskatoon. Specifically, stronger property maintenance bylaws and enforcement were seen as key to dealing with unsafe or undesirable housing.

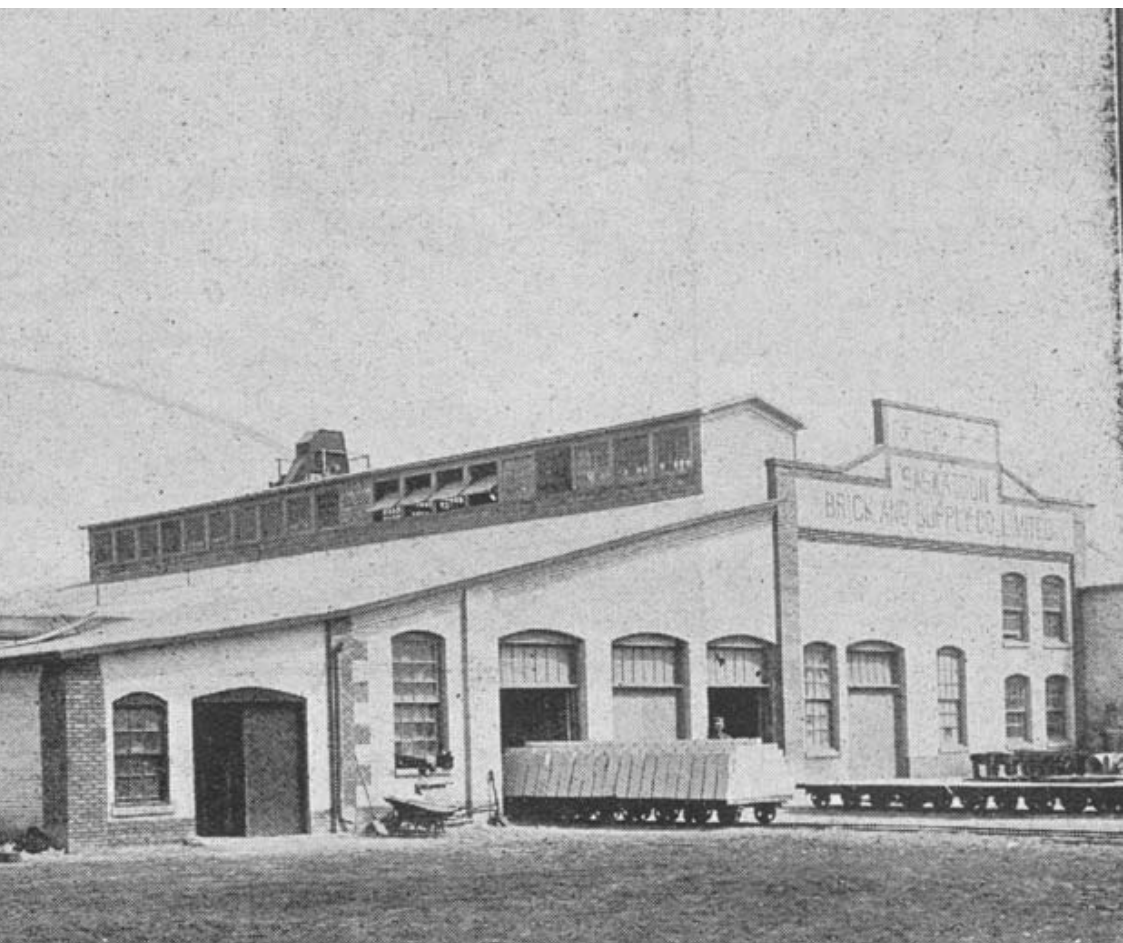


Recreation and Culture Opportunities:

It is important to incorporate recreation, literacy, culture, and life skills opportunities into the new strategy, and some stakeholders would like to see a significant recreation centre constructed in the area.

Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens:

Some stakeholders suggest that it is important for a new strategy to incorporate provisions to promote urban agriculture. Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in the city. Discussions around community gardens did not include the keeping of livestock. Some participants in the stakeholder discussion groups would like to see an environment that would facilitate significantly more people getting involved with small-plot urban gardening.



Connectivity:

Connectivity will be an important aspect of a new strategy for The Junction, both to the City Centre and to other neighbourhoods. The overriding concern from stakeholders is with the safety of people, mostly children, crossing busy corridor streets such as 20th Street to access new developments, schools and seniors centres being constructed in the area.

The other major concern in terms of connectivity and pedestrian corridors is with the CP rail line that bisects the residential neighbourhoods. Pedestrians routinely cross these tracks without the assistance of crossings. In the new strategy, some stakeholders would like to see the rail line purchased from CP and turned into a pedestrian and cyclist corridor pathway, or be used for light transit rail into the City Centre. If purchasing the rail line from CP is not feasible, stakeholders think it is important to develop a safe trail beside the active rail line.

Housing:

There was discussion in the stakeholder sessions that a new strategy for the Junction should include an emphasis on attainable housing in the area, including affordable ownership and entry-level housing for a variety of income levels. Stakeholders often suggest that there should be a balance in the new strategy in terms of the emphasis on affordable housing in The Junction; specifically that affordable housing should occur in neighbourhoods throughout Saskatoon, and average priced housing developments should occur in The Junction as well.



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