



Wintercity YXE

SASKATOON'S WINTER STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



The background features several large, light blue snowflake graphics. One is in the top left, another in the top right, and a large one in the bottom left. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

WintercityYXE

Saskatoon's Winter Strategy Implementation Plan

April 2021

Images used throughout this document were taken prior to COVID-19.



WintercityYXE Vision

Saskatoon is a vibrant, prosperous and dynamic community that thrives during winter months and works together to support an active winter lifestyle that is inclusive and accessible for all.

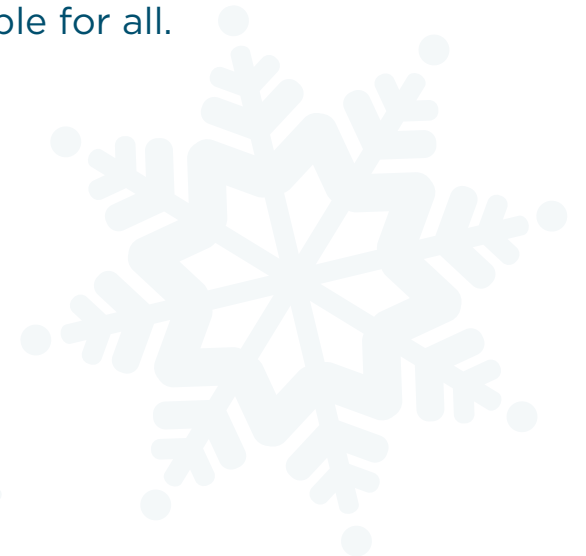




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Introduction

The City of Saskatoon worked with the community to develop WintercityYXE – Saskatoon’s Winter City Strategy.

WintercityYXE celebrates what makes Saskatoon an inviting, vibrant, safe and prosperous place in winter. It will help residents, businesses, organizations and visitors embrace winter with enthusiasm, while recognizing the challenges that vulnerable populations face during winter months.

The Implementation Plan is intended to provide guidance on applying the Strategy. Community members contributed to the Plan by providing input for each Strategy action. Community members were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on where there may be gaps once the draft Plan was completed.



For each Strategy action, the Plan includes information on:

- What support is in place to implement the action;
- Which partners are best positioned to implement the action;
- How success will be measured;
- The expected timeline for implementing the action; and,
- Funding needs, both current and future.

Additional actions to support the community due to the impacts of Covid-19 are listed where appropriate, such as the 2020/2021 Take It Outside Grant program.



Timelines

For the timelines, the following apply:

- Ongoing — actions that are underway;
- Medium term — actions recommended to be underway during the next five years; and,
- Long term — actions recommended beyond the five-year threshold.

Community Prioritization of Actions

Community members were asked to rate each action item into low, medium or high priority. Results are outlined in the Plan. Complete results of the prioritization exercise are provided in the Plan's *What We Heard Report*.





The Implementation Plan



Winter Economy

ACTION 1: Develop and support winter/shoulder-season outdoor cafés

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk cafés are currently permitted during all seasons • 2020/2021 pilot to allow parking patios during winter and no fees for sidewalk cafes/parking patios as part of support during COVID-19 • City’s website includes information on how to make a sidewalk café more welcoming during winter 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Standards
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Tourism Saskatoon
Measurement	Number of sidewalk cafés/parking patios open during winter and shoulder seasons.	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Standards manages existing City funding for this program • Further support may require additional funding 	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 2: Develop and support seasonal/pop-up winter business opportunities

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal/pop-up businesses are currently allowed subject to rules and regulations • Jingle Bell Express provides transportation to various business areas in the city • City Policy in place for Commercial Enterprises in Parks - winter program expected in 2021 • Grant programs including the one-time Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Standards • Planning and Development • Recreation and Community Development • Saskatoon Transit
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Entrepreneurial groups • Community groups • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts
Measurement	Number of seasonal/pop-up winter businesses	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Standards manages existing City funding for business licensing • City funding through grant programs such as the Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) • Further support would require additional funding 	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 3: Research best practices for winter economic opportunities

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	Research and experience from other municipalities and the Winter Cities Institute	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Community Standards
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • University of Saskatchewan • Community groups • Saskatoon Region Economic Development Authority
Measurement	Study completion	
Timeline	Medium Term	
Funding	Funding may be required to fund research and implementation of recommendations	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 4: Support activities that animate winter city life (ways to encourage people to come out and enjoy the street life)

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City’s Public Art program • Urban design support in Business Improvement Districts • City-led ice sculptures project (2019) • Amphitheatres in various locations to use for events • City funding through grant programs such as the Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Development • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Artists • Art programming organizations • Youth organizations/Schools
Measurement	Number of programs/activities that support animation of winter street life	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing City funding for public art through Urban Design programming and Community Development • City funding through a grant program such as the Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) • Further supports may require additional funding 	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 5: Research opportunities to use snow as a resource (e.g. minimize the need to store snow in a snow management facility)

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	Research and experience from other municipalities and the Winter Cities Institute	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Parks • Roadways, Fleet and Support • Sustainability
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • University of Saskatchewan • Winter recreation groups
Measurement	Research completion	
Timeline	Medium Term	
Funding	Funding may be required to implement recommendations	
Community Prioritization	High	





Winter Life and Culture

ACTION 6: Promote indoor and outdoor activities and events

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website and social media – City of Saskatoon, Tourism Saskatoon • City of Saskatoon Leisure Guide • Community Association newsletters and information sharing • Communications support from partners 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and Public Engagement • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Businesses and community-based organizations that run events and activities • Schools and post-secondary institutions
Measurement	Number of opportunities to promote activities and events	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing City funding for leisure programming and Community Associations support. • City funding through grant programs such as the Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) and WintercityYXE 	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 7: Support a variety of existing and new winter activities and events for all ages and abilities including the development of new ideas and concepts

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Saskatoon grant funding • Tourism Saskatoon grant funding • Community-run activities • Outdoor recreational activities (e.g. Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @Nutrien Plaza, Beaver Creek Conservation Area winter programming and Optimist Hill) • Winter Play Programs 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Saskatoon Public Library • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Businesses and community-based organizations and attractions that run events and activities • Schools and post-secondary institutions • Organizations that support persons with disabilities
Measurement	Number of new opportunities	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing funding for leisure programming and Community Association support. • City funding through grant programs such as the Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) • Further support will require additional funding 	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 8: Identify and work to reduce barriers to participating in indoor and outdoor activities and events.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Saskatoon Leisure Access Program • Community Association programming • Subsidized bus passes for low income individuals and families • Grant funding for non-profit organization programming 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development • Saskatoon Transit
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Saskatoon • Saskatoon Public Library • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Businesses and community-based organizations that run events and activities • Schools and post-secondary institutions • Organizations that support persons with disabilities • Organizations that support vulnerable populations
Measurement	Assessment of identified barriers	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Cost for analysis of barrier identification. Funding may be required to implement recommendations	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 9: Provide and promote a variety of transportation options for activities and events.

Known Support Currently in Place (City / Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saskatoon Transit App - Information about bus locations and routes • BYXE - Information about cycling tips and safety including the Cycling Guide App • Transit improvements • Improvements to pedestrian/cycling infrastructure • Funding for cycling related infrastructure (e.g. bicycle parking racks) 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Standards • Saskatoon Transit • Transportation
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxi • Ride sharing services • Event organizers • Organizations that support active transportation (e.g. Walking Saskatoon, Saskatoon Cycles, Bus Riders of Saskatoon) • Businesses and community-based organizations that run events and activities • Tourism Saskatoon • Business Improvement Districts
Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public feedback on transportation options for activities and events • Increased participation at facilities and programs 	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing funding for transit support • Funding may be required to implement further recommendations 	
Community Prioritization	Medium	

ACTION 10: Develop mobile event supports to provide organizers for winter activities and events access to tools that can support their activity or event.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	City of Saskatoon grant funding opportunities including Take It Outside Winter Animation Fund (2020/2021) and WintercityYXE grant	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Tourism Saskatoon • Businesses and community-based organizations that run events and activities
Measurement	Number of mobile event supports	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Existing funding through grants	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 11: Build on Saskatoon’s Cold Weather Strategy to develop a Winter Emergency Response Guide.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold Weather Strategy managed by Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership on behalf of community partners • NotifyNOW - notification system that provides public safety messages 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development • Fire, Emergency Management, Police
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partners that support the Cold Weather Strategy
Measurement	Guide completion	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Funding to prepare guide	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 12: Provide and promote information to residents on “how to winter”, such as:

- **how to support vulnerable populations during winter months**
- **how to host a winter event outside**
- **home maintenance**
- **winter safety**
- **winter gear**

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WintercityYXE website; material to be added as it becomes available • NotifyNOW - notification system that provides public safety messages • Cold Weather Strategy - managed by Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership on behalf of community partners • City’s website - Winter Cycling Tips 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Communications and Public Engagement • Fire, Emergency Management, Police
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partners that support the Cold Weather Strategy • Organizations that support newcomer settlement • Organizations that support vulnerable populations
Measurement	Information on website and accessibility to information	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing funding through WintercityYXE Capital Project 	
Community Prioritization	Medium	

ACTION 13: Develop partnerships with organizations that support vulnerable populations during winter months.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold Weather Strategy - managed by Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership on behalf of community partners 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development • Fire, Emergency Management, Police
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations that work with vulnerable populations • Tourism Saskatoon • Community partners that support the Cold Weather Strategy
Measurement	Number of organizations/people reached through programming	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Funding required to support resources required for this action	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 14: Identify and work to address the needs of vulnerable populations during the winter months.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City funding for public washrooms • Cold Weather Strategy - managed by Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership on behalf of community partners 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Recreation and Community Development • Sustainability • Facilities Management • Neighbourhood Safety
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations that work with vulnerable populations • Tourism Saskatoon • Saskatoon Public Library • Schools
Measurement	Number of organizations/people reached through programming	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City approved \$50,000 funding to support public washrooms in December 2020 • Further funding would be required for additional support 	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 15: Support newcomer settlement providers on winter preparedness initiatives.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	Programs offered by newcomer settlement organizations	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations that support newcomer settlement • Saskatoon Public Library • Schools
Measurement	Number of organizations/newcomers reached	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Funding required to support resources required for this action	
Community Prioritization	High	





Winter Design

ACTION 16: Support actions identified in the [Active Transportation Plan](#).

- a. Explore opportunities for winter-based active transportation including multi-modal transportation (bike/bus/walk).
- b. Address the need for all season end-of-trip bicycle facilities.
- c. Design, designate and prioritize a winter cycling network for snow removal.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action items identified in the City’s Active Transportation Plan • Supported by the City’s Low Emission Community Plan • Winter Bike to Work Day • Development of Bus Rapid Transit • Existing trail networks throughout the City 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Planning and Development • Sustainability • Roadways, Fleet and Support
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations and businesses that support Active Transportation (e.g. Walking Saskatoon, Saskatoon Cycles, Bus Riders of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Flatlanders Fat Tire Brigade)
Measurement	These items will be reported on through the relevant Plans and initiatives	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Further funding may be required to support this action. Funding requests will be brought forward through the appropriate Plans and initiatives	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 17: Seek opportunities to expand the Snow Angel Program.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action item identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Standards Roadways, Fleet and Support
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Community Associations Non-profit organizations offering support for seniors (e.g. Services for Seniors)
Measurement	These items will be reported on through the relevant initiatives	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Funding to be provided through the relevant Plans and initiatives	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 18: Provide appropriate winter maintenance of roadways, sidewalks next to City properties, pathways, trails, active transportation infrastructure and at civic sites.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Level of Snow and Ice Management identified • Information to public regarding service levels 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadways, Fleet and Support • Facilities Management • Parks
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow clearing companies • Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District
Measurement	Service level of snow and ice management reporting	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Existing City funding through snow and ice management programming and park pathway clearing budgets	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 19: Ensure access to transit during inclement weather and more comfortable transit shelters.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action item identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan SafeBus Program 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saskatoon Transit
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Riders of Saskatoon Walking Saskatoon
Measurement	These items will be reported on through the relevant Plans and initiatives	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	Funding provided through the relevant Plans and initiatives	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 20: Identify and address accessibility barriers for all modes of transportation in winter.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City’s Accessibility Action Plan • Support by the Active Transportation Plan 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Facilities Management • Accessibility Action Plan Refresh Lead • Planning and Development, Neighbourhood Safety
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SaskAbilities • Saskatoon Accessibility Advisory Committee • Saskatoon Council on Aging • Barrier Free Saskatchewan
Measurement	Accessibility Action Plan Refresh reporting	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	City funding through Accessibility Action Plan Refresh	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 21: Develop and implement Winter Design Guidelines.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Community Plan includes four season language 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Development • Building Standards • Sustainability
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Industry (e.g. developers, architects, planners, landscape architects) • Business Improvement Districts
Measurement	Completion of guidelines	
Timeline	Medium to Long Term	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding required for resources to complete guidelines • Additional funding may be required for implementation 	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 22: Explore how outdoor spaces can be better used in the winter months.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant funding to support winter recreation infrastructure • Recreational activities such cross country ski trails, toboggan hills, rinks, etc. • Commercial Enterprises in Parks 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks • Recreation and Community Development
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Associations • Sporting organizations and clubs • Schools
Measurement	Number of winter activities options	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing City funding through Commercial Enterprises in Parks, grants, Community Association funding and parks funding • Further funding may be required for additional support 	
Community Prioritization	High	



ACTION 23: Examine the need and benefit of a comprehensive winter lighting strategy and invest in projects that advance learning for the development of a lighting strategy.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community discussions about lighting (2018) • River Landing lighting analysis (2018) • Temporary lighting displays by community organizations • One-time funding to the Decorative Lighting Program 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Development • Sustainability • Saskatoon Light and Power • Parks • Facilities Management
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses/Business Improvement Districts • Tourism Saskatoon • Development Industry (e.g. developers, architects, planners, landscape architects) • Schools • University of Saskatchewan • Lighting experts
Measurement	Completion of needs analysis and scope for a lighting strategy	
Timeline	Medium to Long Term	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to determine needs and scope for a lighting study • Additional funding would be required to complete a lighting study and implement recommendations 	
Community Prioritization	High	

ACTION 24: Support the development of winter amenities and facilities.

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	Borrowed warming huts from Winnipeg in 2018	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Planning and Development, Urban Design • Facilities Management
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Improvement Districts • Tourism Saskatoon • Development Industry (e.g. developers, architects, planners, landscape architects) • Meewasin • Organizations that support vulnerable populations
Measurement	Evaluation and needs assessment for a seasonal shelter program	
Timeline	Long Term	
Funding	Funding to be determined once proposed amenity and facilities are set	
Community Prioritization	Medium	



ACTION 25: Plan for and invest in winterized washroom facilities

Known Support Currently in Place (City/Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winterized washrooms approved for Hampton Village, Rosewood, Evergreen and Stonebridge (2019) • City funding to support public washrooms provided in December 2020 • Winterized washrooms in riverbank parks • Festival site headquarters building designed to include winterized washrooms 	
Partners	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter City Lead • Facilities Management • Recreation and Community Development • Parks • Sustainability
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Associations (in conjunction with winter rinks/activities) • Meewasin • Business Improvement Districts • Community Support Officers • Organizations that support vulnerable populations
Measurement	Inventory of winterized washrooms	
Timeline	Ongoing	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City approved \$50,000 funding to support winterized washrooms in December 2020 • Facilities Department funding to support service level for winter operations of public washrooms. Further funding required to support opening for more hours, etc. 	
Community Prioritization	High	



Next Steps

Community members provided recommendations on next steps for each action item. A list of these recommendations is provided in the Plan's *What We Heard Report* and will be shared with appropriate groups for consideration as each action item advances.

Actions that require City funding or resource supports will be addressed through the City's regular budget process including continuing support for the WintercityYXE Program.

Regular progress updates will be provided to Council.





 *City of*
Saskatoon

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