



City of  
**Saskatoon**



**SREDA**

## Media Release

### Downtown Destination Guide Launched Today

Monday June 29, 2020: A guide promoting Downtown Saskatoon as a place to live work, play, and invest, has launched today. The Guide, titled *"Downtown Saskatoon: Urban with a Prairie Heart"* was produced by a partnership including City of Saskatoon, Downtown Saskatoon, Tourism Saskatoon and SREDA.

"The Downtown is where we live out so much of the story of Saskatoon," says Mayor Charlie Clark. "The beautiful South Saskatchewan River runs alongside the Downtown, connecting people who have lived on these lands over thousands of years. Business and culture come together here, showing the world our prairie grit and ingenuity. We're an ambitious and resilient city that punches above our weight and is willing to take on any challenge that's before us."

In early 2019, a group of Saskatoon businesses, groups, institutions and individuals came together in a three-day workshop to examine what strategies were needed to stimulate development in Downtown Saskatoon. Many ideas were developed and are contained in a 2019 document called *"Inquiry Toward a Downtown Stimulus Strategy for Saskatoon."* One of the goals that came out of the workshop was to articulate a Downtown narrative that would tell the story of how Downtown was established and to create a vision for the future Downtown built on its many strengths.

"Downtown is the genuine heart of our City, says Brent Penner, Executive Director, Downtown Saskatoon. "Downtown contains landmarks, distinctive features, historic places, and provides a unique sense of place. It is home to the performing and visual arts, boutique shopping, authentic restaurants, colourful events & festivals, and great hotels. In addition to being a key cultural and business hub, Downtown is a neighbourhood full of people who live and work here every day."

A first step in developing the Guide, and to ensure it was authentic to the experiences of Saskatoon residents, was to run a social media campaign last summer, called #WeBelongDtnyxe. Residents sent in photos or stories about what they loved about the Downtown. The entries formed the basis for the narrative that was created, organized around three main themes that emerged strongly: room to breathe, space to grow, place to belong.

"To capture the essence of a destination, visitors understand that you must seek out its centre," says Todd Brandt, President and CEO of Tourism Saskatoon. "Saskatoon's downtown is filled with a diverse mix of experiences, from festivals and concerts to outdoor adventures. It is a place where you can discover the authentic soul of the city by stepping into one of our first class farm-to-table restaurants, experience rich Indigenous history and culture, modern art and prairie heritage - all within the heart of our city."

In the Downtown Guide, quotes from Saskatoon residents about their experiences are used to pull together the narrative.

*“We are loving downtown living. The greatest surprise is that you really are part of a neighbourhood, from shopkeepers who recognize us on dog walks to daily small chats with neighbours at the elevators. For my teen, her friends enjoy visiting because there are always things to do. We enjoy the river valley daily. I work on campus so my commute is a walk or bike ride over the bridge most of the year and a bus ride for a few cold months.”*

– Janice L. Braden, downtown resident and University of Saskatchewan employee

*“We see a city that is keeping its youth, and with that, an opportunity is available to Saskatoon to enhance the vibrancy of their downtown by creating a live, work and play environment that you see in other urban centers. We have responded to that opportunity by creating Saskatchewan’s first mixed use development offering innovative and unique architecture as well as world-class indoor and outdoor amenities that the workforce of Saskatoon has been waiting for.”*

– Blair Sinclair, EVP Investment & Development, Triovest Western Canada

*“There is a certain energy that comes with being located in a city centre and our downtown campus is right on that pulse... We look forward to a bright future downtown and the many opportunities that it offers our alumni.”*

– Riel Bellegarde, President & CEO, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

The Downtown Guide can be found on the Downtown Saskatoon website:

<https://dtnyxe.ca/destination-downtown/> as well as a booklet with the partner organizations.

“A city’s energy is best expressed by its downtown,” says Alex Fallon, CEO, SREDA. “For Saskatoon, that is a powerful alchemy of culture, community and optimism. Where else can you find thriving businesses just steps from tree-lined river paths, modern art next to natural prairie landscapes? Downtown Saskatoon offers everything you need, from dawn to dusk, culture to commerce. It’s not just the heart of our city, but also the meeting place for minds, and the backbone to a thriving arts and food scene. There’s no better place in the world to grow.”

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