



SWIFT CURRENT **2014**

The Next 100 Years

Strategic Plan 2014.2015.2016



Getting there

Our goal in presenting a new 3 year strategic vision is to outline the plans we're making and the actions we're taking to make our community stronger and safer and ready to grow. From economic development and sound infrastructure to sustainable city services and cultural celebrations, we hope to address the issues and answer the questions that matter to you. Our focus includes a wide range of challenges and a host of opportunities that we believe are the key to the future and a better quality of life for all of us. Individual plans, strategies and initiatives that are either underway or under consideration are included in the overall strategic plan to give you a sense of how we're learning from the past, managing the present and preparing for the future.



Mayor Jerrod Schafer

Mayor's message

As we celebrate our centennial in 2014 and our community's very bright future going forward, I believe we owe it to those who came before to look back in thanks and to learn the lessons that their hard work and commitment can teach us. The men and women who made Swift Current happen did so with the hope and optimism that through their efforts, their children might grow up in a community that would be a place of safety and of opportunity.

A place where they're free to dream and to grow and to see those dreams come true.

A place where we build fences to keep the family dog in and not our neighbours out.

It is our turn to make the choices and to take up the challenges that will keep our city strong for the next hundred years. Our path going forward will have its share of twists and turns, but I am extremely confident that our goals and our direction have done our predecessors proud. As you will see throughout the new strategic plan, we are on the right track and we are ready to grow and we look forward to the many emerging opportunities the future brings.

Thanks for taking the time to review the new plan. I'd like to thank City Council and the entire City Hall team for caring so much about getting things done right.

This is our community. And we're all in this together.

I am very proud to be your Mayor and I will continue to work tirelessly to deserve the trust you've placed in me.

Members of Council

Like the Mayor, we are all very proud to represent the people of Swift Current as our city enters its second century. Like you, we are filled with optimism that the immediate future will see Swift Current take its place in the spotlight as one of Saskatchewan's premiere communities. We would like to thank all those who answered our questions and took the time to give us their thoughts and ideas on how to make life better for all of our residents and we want to let you know that we were listening. Our focus on responsible fiscal policies and managed growth are a direct result of those exchanges.

As your representatives, we will continue to listen to what you have to say, knowing full well that it won't all be pats on the back and we won't please all of the people all of the time. What we will do is dedicate ourselves to the idea that Swift Current will live up to its heritage as a wonderful place to live. We will continue to improve and expand our services with an emphasis on efficiency, affordability and sustainability. We will keep our taxes low and our costs contained. We will remain focused on ensuring that our infrastructure is ready for the future, our streets are safe and our facilities are available to be enjoyed by all of our residents. We will support our youth. We will be senior friendly. We will embrace and celebrate our differences and our diversity because we know that if we all give a little, we all get a lot.

It's an exciting time to live in Swift Current. Thanks to all for your support.

Twenty five by 25

It's not hard to imagine the Swift Current of the future. Simply put, the Swift Current we want for our families and for our children is a safe, vibrant, modern community we are proud to call home. What we do now will shape that city and secure that future. Our ideas and our dreams will write the next chapter in our city's history and our successes will set the tone for those that follow.

We believe that when smart thinking meets thoughtful planning, our community will grow. We also believe in setting realistic goals. That combination of knowing where we want to go and what it's going to take to get there gives us the confidence to envision a Swift Current in 2025 with a population that is 25,000 strong. Realizing that vision means embracing the paths and the policies that must be present to put the plan in motion.

Twenty five by 25 is an achievable dream. With your support, we're ready to get started.

Here's to the next 100 years.



We're on a mission...2014 2015 2016

For the next three years, we propose to put in place the assets and the tools we'll need to reach our strategic goals and objectives.

Having our house in order

If we are to attract new residents to fuel the growth we desire, we will do well to exceed their expectations. Affordable homes, safe streets, above average incomes and small business opportunities that create jobs are things people seeking to relocate hope to find in a new hometown. Like the rest of us, they also want world class health care, great schools and city services that deliver on promises of putting the customer first. These are the "selling" features and benefits that will make us competitive as a city.

What sets us apart is our commitment to keeping property taxes competitive, and our assurance that growth and prosperity will remain a high priority. The bottom line is that if we continue to make our city safer and greener and more culturally diverse for current residents, we will all enjoy an exceptional quality of life and we will be well positioned to compete for new residential growth going forward.

Taking care of business

If we are to attract new investment and new business to fuel the cost of that growth, we must demonstrate that our infrastructure and our attitudes are forward thinking and business friendly. Good roads, cheap power, tax incentives and neighbourhoods that employees want to live in are vital elements for businesses and industries looking to establish or relocate their operations. The highly competitive process of being considered an ideal location for new business development demands that we put our best foot forward and highlight our many strengths and that we rise to the challenges and break down the barriers that will ultimately inhibit growth.

Our focus and dedication will continue to take us in that direction.

At our core

These are the core values that establish who we are and how we will conduct ourselves in the day to day management of the community. The decisions that we make must represent the will of the majority of our citizens and we will always act in the best interests of the community as a whole. If our best practices reflect these values, Swift Current will always stand on solid ground.

Trust

We must prove worthy of your faith in us. It starts and ends with open, honest communication that spurs discussion and sparks ideas that benefit us all as we grow.

Respect

We have to earn it. Our ability to lead succeeds only when we demonstrate that we are deserving of your confidence and your support.

Responsibility

We are accountable. We are tasked with making the tough decisions that will move our city forward and we owe each and every citizen the promise of our best efforts in doing so.

Commitment

We work for you. You put us here to make things happen and to get things done. Our dedication to meet and exceed your expectations will continue to drive our efforts as our community grows.

Vision

We must look ahead. What we do now will frame the future and light the way so, together, we can transform the idea of Twenty five by 25 from an ambitious vision to a very welcome reality.





Managing city services

Keeping our city functioning and user friendly on a day to day basis is perhaps our biggest responsibility and our entire administrative team take that responsibility very seriously. We will continue to closely monitor and enhance all services, big and small, to ensure that our community's needs are met. What follows is an outline of many of the priorities that we feel will significantly contribute to achieving the growth we expect tomorrow and the quality of life we deserve today.

Key areas of focus

Community Services

Beautification and comfort zones
Pathway enhancement
City signage strategy
Enhanced arts and culture

Centennial celebrations
Enhanced parks and recreation
Going greener & getting active
Creek utilization study

Infrastructure and Operations

Facilities master plan
Utilities sustainability study
Asset management

- policy implementation
- infrastructure assessment

Public transit improvement plan
Environmental strategy

- solid waste
- recycling

Planning, developing and growing our city

Looking forward, it is imperative that we put plans in place that will keep our community moving in the right direction. We simply cannot “let growth happen”. We must prepare for the new demands that growth will place on our community and we must push ourselves to stay ahead of those demands. By establishing and engaging clear targets of opportunity, we believe we will remain ready and able to deliver the improvements and the changes necessary to ensure future growth.

Key areas of focus

Planning

Vibrant neighbourhood initiative
Downtown revitalization
Increase community engagement
Urban design initiatives

Developing

Tourism initiative
Economic diversity strategy
Enhance community development
Identify redevelopment plan
Integrated facility
Regional projects
Shared use facilities

Growing

Housing alternatives and infill strategy
Growth strategy
Resident retention and expansion
Science and technology
Transportation / US border / airport
Relationship building / regional partnerships
Business retention and expansion
 - economic growth project
Economic Advisory Team
Support post-secondary education development





A safe and caring community

We are united in our belief that our most fundamental role is to keep our people safe. At work and at play. Our streets and our green space must be comfortable places for our kids to play. Our seniors should feel secure in and out of their homes, knowing we've put their wellbeing first. Our schools and our health-related institutions must be second to none and all public facilities should be welcoming places to every citizen who chooses to use them.

Key areas of focus

Police, fire and safety

Support youth initiatives

Enhanced senior services

Accessibility for all

Welcoming newcomers

Support health and education

Employee safety initiative

Traffic safety review

Being the best we can be

Operational excellence is the result of an ongoing commitment to one simple rule. Never settle. By continuously raising our "skill set" bar, we increase our ability to manage and control not only the day to day functions of a city our size, but the naturally occurring growing pains associated with that growth as well. In other words, by keeping up we avoid having to catch up.

Our focus falls on seven key areas

Customer service excellence

Improve professional development and training

Best practices

Retention and succession initiatives

Employer of choice

Proactive financial strategy

Effective and efficient management

Reaching out

Engaging each other

Let's talk a little more

As our Mayor so correctly suggests, we truly are all in this together. Each of us, young and old alike, has a stake in our collective future and we should all have an opportunity to contribute our ideas and voice our thoughts as we plan our shared tomorrows. As your city management and elected representatives, it is our job to create and present those opportunities and then to listen to what you have to say. As stakeholders, it is the responsibility of every citizen in our community with something to say to show up and speak up and be part of an ongoing dialogue that will bring about the positive change we seek to achieve. When we think and plan and act like a team, we'll be ready to take on the world.

Let's begin by *Keeping Current*.

The *Keeping Current* concept is about communication and transparency. It provides a series of public forums specifically targeted to a variety of demographic groups and invites interested citizens to participate in an ongoing dialogue between City Hall and the city's "street". Targeted to launch in late spring, *Keeping Current* will include the following...

Mayor in the Morning

Big Ideas and Beans

Tell Us What You Really Think

Being Senior

TeenSpeak

Welcoming the world

Let's shout a little louder

Our ability to bring about sustainable population growth means inviting new ideas and fresh thinking. We will never be the only community looking for new citizens and we'll certainly never be the only city forging partnerships with businesses and government. What we can be is better at it than all the others. For that to happen, our message must stand out in a crowd. Our presentation must pique interest and inspire action. Once we have people's attention, the job of rising above the clutter and convincing them that Swift Current deserves a serious look as a place to work and a place to play and a place to invest will get significantly easier.

The critical first step in "selling" the Swift Current of Tomorrow to the rest of the world is to design and launch an advertising message that tells the world who we are and where we're going as a community. Ideally, the message will be built around a single, attention grabbing theme that positions Swift Current as a city "on the move". It should also "compliment" and "play on" our city's name and it should "invite" our target audience to come take a closer look. The right choice will "roll off the tongue" and will form a foundation for entire promotional campaigns designed to bring the world to our door.

The fun factor... Building on what works

Thanks to the tireless efforts of a super talented group of event organizers and their incredibly hard working teams of volunteers, we've already earned quite an enviable reputation for knowing how to throw a party. Windscape, Market Square, Long Days Night and Frontier Days, to name a few, are perfect examples of what we can do when we work together. Our successes also include international curling events , national hockey tournaments and Western Canadian baseball championships. Let's build on those successes and set our sights on making these current attractions even bigger and better. Let's also create exciting new events and fresh opportunities to raise our profile and boost our tourism. Making these things we do well an integral part of our overall promotional message raises our "voice" and increases our value as a "place to play".





Bringing it all together

On January 15, 2014, the sun rose on a new century for Swift Current.

As you can see, there's a lot to do. As you can imagine, we can't do it all at once. What we can do is prepare properly and prioritize prudently. That is the purpose of the plan. It gives us a road map and a timeline that we can follow to reach our stated objectives. It's not carved in stone and it will always allow us the flexibility to respond to the inevitable unknowns, good and bad, that we all know will surprise us along the way. Ultimately, it strives to inform our citizens of where we're headed and underscores our sense of who we want to be today and in the future. Our hope and belief is that by working together in common purpose now, our future will indeed be a bright one.



SWIFT CURRENT 2014

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