

## **Proposal to Establish the Confederation Urban Centre Business Improvement District (BID)**

**Submitted to:** Saskatoon City Council

**Submitted by:** Saskatoon West Business Association (SWBA)

**Area:** Confederation Urban Centre

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### **Executive Summary**

The Saskatoon West Business Association (SWBA) respectfully submits this proposal to Saskatoon City Council requesting approval to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) within the Confederation Urban Centre boundaries. The proposed BID will provide a formal governance and funding structure to support economic vitality, safety, beautification, advocacy, and coordinated business-led investment in one of Saskatoon's most important west-side commercial hubs.

The Confederation Urban Centre serves as a major retail, service, and employment destination for west Saskatoon and surrounding neighbourhoods. While the area benefits from strong anchors and a diverse mix of businesses, it faces increasing pressures related to aging infrastructure, public safety concerns, competition from other commercial areas, and the need for coordinated place-making and promotion.

Establishing a BID will enable local businesses to collectively invest in solutions, align priorities, and partner more effectively with the City of Saskatoon to strengthen the area's economic resilience and community impact. The proposed BID aligns with City goals related to economic development, community safety, urban revitalization, and collaborative governance.

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### **Background and Context**

The Saskatoon West Business Association has served businesses in west Saskatoon by fostering collaboration, advocacy, and community connection. Through ongoing engagement with business owners and property owners in the Confederation Urban Centre, there is clear interest in creating a more structured, sustainable model to:

- Enhance the customer and employee experience
- Improve safety, cleanliness, and aesthetics
- Strengthen the area's brand and reputation
- Provide a unified voice for businesses
- Leverage partnerships and funding opportunities

A Business Improvement District is a proven municipal tool used across Saskatoon and other Canadian cities to empower business communities to address shared challenges and opportunities through a locally governed, levy-funded model.

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### **Proposed BID Boundary**

The proposed Confederation Urban Centre BID boundary includes the commercial properties within the established Confederation Urban Centre area. A detailed boundary map will be provided in accordance with City of Saskatoon BID policy and legislative requirements.

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## **Rationale for Establishing the BID**

### **1. Economic Vitality and Competitiveness**

Retail and commercial districts are facing rapid change due to evolving consumer behaviour, labour challenges, and increased competition. A BID allows businesses to collectively invest in marketing, events, and district identity to attract customers, retain tenants, and support long-term economic health.

### **2. Safety and Cleanliness**

Businesses have consistently identified safety, cleanliness, and maintenance as top priorities. A BID can supplement municipal services through initiatives such as:

- Coordinated safety and ambassador programs
- Graffiti removal and enhanced cleaning
- Improved lighting and visibility
- Collaboration with police, outreach, and social service partners

### **3. Beautification and Placemaking**

Targeted investments in streetscaping, seasonal décor, public art, and wayfinding improve the visual appeal of the area, encourage longer visits, and foster pride among businesses and customers alike.

### **4. Stronger Advocacy and Coordination**

A BID provides a unified, representative structure that allows businesses to engage more effectively with City administration and Council on matters such as infrastructure planning, transportation, zoning, and public realm improvements.

### **5. Local Leadership and Accountability**

BIDs are governed by a board made up primarily of levy-paying members, ensuring that decisions are business-led, transparent, and responsive to local priorities. This model ensures accountability and measurable outcomes.

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## Benefits to the City of Saskatoon

The proposed Confederation Urban Centre BID offers clear benefits to the City, including:

- **Shared Investment:** Leveraging private-sector levy dollars to complement municipal services and priorities
  - **Economic Growth:** Supporting business retention, job creation, and tax base stability
  - **Reduced Pressure on City Resources:** Proactive, locally driven solutions to safety, maintenance, and place management
  - **Community Well-being:** Safer, cleaner, and more vibrant commercial spaces that serve residents city-wide
  - **Strategic Alignment:** Advancing City objectives related to economic development, community safety, and urban revitalization
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## Proposed Programs and Services (Initial Focus)

While final priorities will be determined by the BID board and members, anticipated areas of focus include:

- District marketing and promotion
  - Business-to-business networking and support
  - Safety and cleanliness initiatives
  - Beautification and placemaking projects
  - Events and activations
  - Advocacy and liaison with the City
  - Data collection and reporting on district performance
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## Governance and Accountability

The Confederation Urban Centre BID will operate as a not-for-profit organization in accordance with provincial legislation and City of Saskatoon BID policy. Governance will include:

- A board of directors primarily composed of levy-paying business and property owners
- Annual business plans and budgets submitted to the City
- Transparent financial reporting and annual financial statements
- Ongoing engagement with members and stakeholders

SWBA will support the transition and establishment phase to ensure strong governance, operational readiness, and alignment with City expectations.

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## **Financial Model**

The BID will be funded through a City-collected levy applied to commercial properties within the approved boundary. The levy rate and budget will be developed in consultation with members and submitted to City Council for approval as part of the BID establishment process.

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## **Conclusion**

The Saskatoon West Business Association believes the establishment of a Confederation Urban Centre Business Improvement District is a timely, strategic investment in the long-term success of west Saskatoon. By empowering businesses to lead, collaborate, and invest locally, the BID will strengthen economic resilience, improve community safety and vibrancy, and deliver shared value for businesses, residents, and the City of Saskatoon.

SWBA respectfully requests Saskatoon City Council's support to proceed with the establishment of the Confederation Urban Centre BID.

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## **Respectfully submitted,**

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