

Saskatoon is "The City of Bridges" and appropriately named due to the seven structures that span the South Saskatchewan River. These bridges are a vital part of the fabric of the community, and of the history of Saskatoon. From the railway bridges that helped make Saskatoon the central economic hub of the province, to the first traffic bridge that served as catalyst to the formation of the city, the building of each bridge echoed the growth of Saskatoon. To this day they continue to move both people and the economy of the city forward, and form the heart of "The City of Bridges".



Canadian National Railway Bridge

### Canadian National Railway Bridge

This steel trestle bridge was completed in **March of 1908** as part of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway that connected Winnipeg and Edmonton. It was the third major railway line to run through Saskatoon and helped assure the city's position as the primary wholesale-retail distribution centre for central Saskatchewan. In 1923 the bridge became part of the Canadian National Railway.



LH 3969

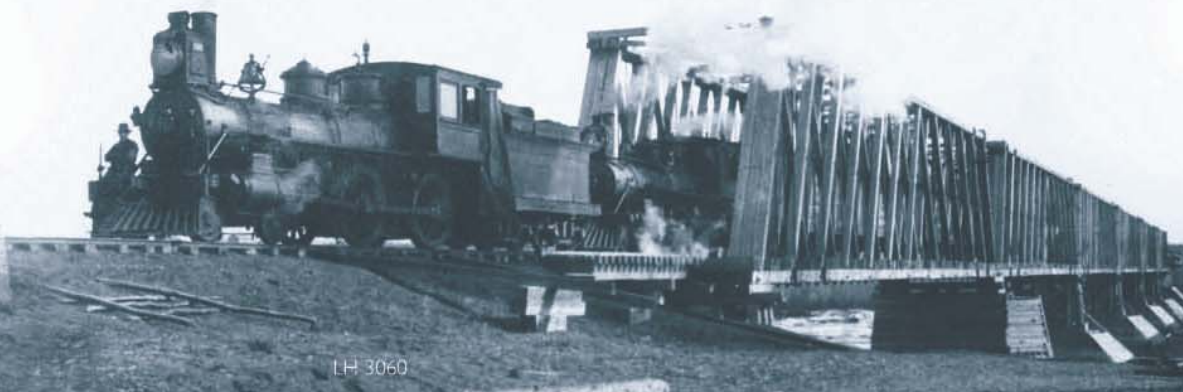


LH 4163

### Senator Sidney L. Buckwold Bridge

The Senator Sidney L. Buckwold Bridge officially opened on **October 28th, 1966**. Originally named for the Idylwyld Freeway – of which it forms a part – the bridge was re-named in 2001 in honour of Sid Buckwold, who was Mayor of Saskatoon when it was built. It is located on the site of Saskatoon's first bridge, the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan railway bridge that was originally built in 1890 as part of the line connecting Regina and Prince Albert. The railway bridge was demolished in 1964 as part of the rail line relocation project that cleared the way for the Idylwyld Freeway and the downtown Midtown Plaza development.

Built at a cost of \$1.5 million, the bridge is 183 metres (600 feet) long, and is located at the narrowest point on the river within Saskatoon.



LH 3050

### Traffic Bridge / Victoria Bridge

The Traffic Bridge (also known as Victoria Bridge) officially opened on **October 10, 1907**. Saskatoon's first bridge specifically designed for foot and vehicle traffic, it was built at the insistence of the people of Nutana, who needed a safe and reliable way for vehicles, pedestrians and freight to cross the river. The existing river ferry was anything but reliable, and the only other way across was the railway bridge, which for foot traffic was anything but safe! The promise of this bridge was key to Nutana's agreement to join with the west side communities of Saskatoon and Riversdale in forming the City of Saskatoon in 1906. It was built at a cost of \$106,000 and was paid for by the provincial government.



LH 2479

On June 7, 1908, the Traffic Bridge was the site of the Saskatoon's only "maritime disaster", when the steamship S.S. City of Medicine Hat crashed broadside into the one of its concrete piers, and sank.

From 1913-1933, streetcars of the Saskatoon Municipal Railway crossed this bridge. The Traffic Bridge is called a "through-truss" bridge (meaning that traffic travels through the trusses) and is 294 metres (964 feet) long. Although it has been known by many names over its long history, it is most correctly known by its original name: the "Traffic Bridge".



LH 3321



Photo: John P. Heston

### Broadway Bridge

The Broadway Bridge was designed by engineers from the University of Saskatchewan, and was built by the City in partnership with the federal and provincial governments as a "make work project" during the Great Depression. It was finished in just 11 months, opening on **November 11, 1932**. A total of 1,593 men worked around the clock to build it.

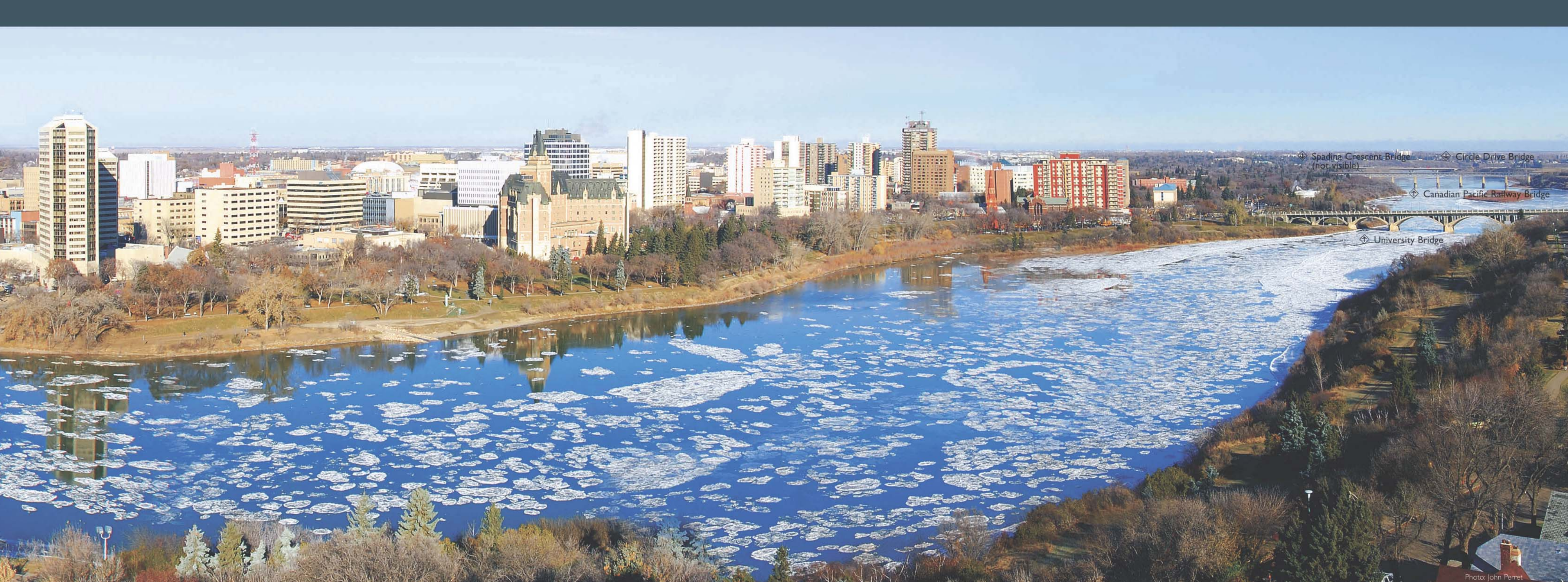
In 1933, the streetcar lines of the Saskatoon Municipal Railway were re-routed so as to cross the river on the Broadway Bridge rather than on the much-narrower Traffic Bridge as they had originally done.

The Broadway Bridge is 355 metres (1164 feet) long. With a four per cent grade, it is Saskatoon's steepest bridge. The total cost at the time of construction was \$850,000.



LH 185





### University Bridge

The University Bridge officially opened on **November 15, 1916**. A notable feature of its design is the descending size of its arches, which were described as "like a stone skipping across water". It was built to link Sutherland and the University of Saskatchewan with the central part of the city across the river.

Begun in 1913, construction of the bridge was delayed when the original contractor went bankrupt. It was completed by the provincial government, with the City of Saskatoon paying one-third of the \$520,000 cost. Although a double line of streetcar track was laid over the University Bridge when it was built, it was never used and the rails were removed in 1947.

Despite being a part of Saskatoon for most of the city's history, the University Bridge was not formally named until January 1, 2006. It is 378 metres (1240 feet) long, with a 62 foot wide road bed containing two vehicle lanes and two side walkways. It slopes down at a 3 per cent gradient from the east to the west end.

### Spadina Crescent Bridge



The concrete bridge across the ravine on Spadina Crescent was built in **1930** to replace an earlier wooden structure. In 1933, a series of small ponds were dug in the ravine as part of a relief work project aimed at beautifying "Central Park",

as it was then known. The system of ponds was extended in the 1950s, and along with the charming little bridge, created "an oasis of calm and beauty" in the heart of the city. The pond system has since been filled in.

Built during the Great Depression, the Spadina Crescent Bridge remains unknown to most people, yet thousands of cars pass over it daily.

### Canadian Pacific Railway Bridge

This high steel trestle bridge opened on **June 15, 1908**. It is part of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) trunk line between Winnipeg and Edmonton. This was the second major rail line routed through Saskatoon. Located on what was then the north edge of the city, the bridge linked the CPR's divisional yards at Sutherland with its station in downtown Saskatoon. It replaced a temporary wooden trestle bridge that had been constructed at the same location one year earlier.

The pedestrian walkway was added in 1909. Originally, the City of Saskatoon asked that the bridge be designed so as to allow a single lane of traffic to be added on each side later. These traffic lanes would have cost \$50,000 more, however, and eventually the City decided to build the University Bridge instead.

The CPR Bridge is 341 metres (1120 feet) long.



### Circle Drive Bridge

This steel girder bridge was officially opened on **July 1st, 1983** as part of Saskatoon's "Circle Drive" bypass system. It links the city's newer northern areas with the south and east side, allowing traffic to bypass downtown. It was originally 4 lanes wide with an opening down the centre where two more lanes might be added in the future. In 2006 a bridge expansion project began that would convert the outer pedestrian walkways to traffic lanes, and build a pedestrian walkway down the centre. The entire project is to be completed in 2007.

The bridge deck is 275 metres (902 feet) long and is curved so as to connect to the northern extension of Circle Drive on the west side. The total cost at the time of construction was \$11.8 million dollars.

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are provided courtesy of the Saskatoon Public Library, Local History Room.

**The City acknowledges the following sponsors of this brochure**  
 – City Archives – Infrastructure Services – Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee  
 – Heritage Conservation Program

[www.saskatoon.ca](http://www.saskatoon.ca)  
 (306) 975-2993

