

Preston Ave. project to improve access to Innovation Place

With the opening of the major interchange on Circle Drive and the extension of Preston Avenue to Attridge Drive past the Preston Crossing retail development, access to and from Innovation Place has been impeded, says Doug Tastad, Acting President of Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation.

The good news is that the City of Saskatoon has announced that this summer Preston Avenue will be widened to four lanes, from the CP tracks to just north of 108th Street. The road construction is the second phase of the City's three-part road improvement project to Circle Drive and Preston Avenue. A third phase, pending city budget approval, will take place in 2004, extending the widening of Preston Avenue south to 14th Street.

Tastad says, "We're co-operating with the City to ensure that the widening of Preston Avenue goes ahead and that appropriate traffic signals will be installed to improve access to the research park."

Jeff Balon, City of Saskatoon Traffic Engineering Manager, says road construction will begin early this spring, as soon as weather conditions allow. The project should take two to three months to complete, at an anticipated cost of \$1.4 million.

"Last year, we connected Attridge to the existing Preston Avenue thoroughfare just south of the CPR rail

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Health Quality Council seeks innovative ways to improve health care in Saskatchewan

The first agency of its kind in Canada, the Health Quality Council (HQC) is an independent body recently established by the provincial government to identify ways to improve Saskatchewan's health care system. HQC is located at 241 - 111 Research Drive, at Innovation Place.

The formation of a Health Quality Council was first recommended by Ken Fyke in his April 2001 Commission on Medicare report and was subsequently a key component of The Action Plan for Saskatchewan Health Care unveiled in December of 2001. Legislation enacting the Health Quality Council became effective January 1, 2003.

"The Health Quality Council has been established to monitor and improve the quality of health care in Saskatchewan. We are an arms-length provincial government agency, with a board comprised of provincial, national and international health leaders," says Laurence Thompson, interim CEO of the Council.

Dr. Stewart McMillan serves as chair of the Health Quality Council board. "Together we will be working toward the goals of improving health outcomes for patients and finding ways to benefit the province's health care system by developing evidence-based approaches and promoting effective practices throughout the system," says McMillan.

Dr. Don Berwick, president and CEO of the U.S.-based Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) serves as special advisor to the Health Quality Council Board. The IHI is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of health care systems

through education, research and demonstration projects, and the fostering of collaboration among health care organizations and their leaders.

"This is an exciting opportunity to work with a province that is a leader in health care initiatives. With health systems around the world facing increasingly complex and costly challenges, organizations like the council play a significant role in improving health policy and management and providing people with an excellent health care system," says Berwick.

HQC will work to improve standards of health care delivery in Saskatchewan, by identifying outdated or ineffective treatments, promoting effective practices and researching quality improvement initiatives.

The Council will also monitor and assess the performance of the province's health care system, providing advice on human resource needs, assessing appropriate drug-prescribing practices and evaluating new technologies, pharmaceuticals and clinical developments.

HQC researchers will compile evidence and data from medical literature on key issues. The Council will also strike working groups or study panels of medical experts within the Saskatchewan health care community to assess these findings within a provincial context.

The Council will report these findings to government, regional health authorities and health care professionals.

"Roy Romanow called for a national health quality council in his report on health

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Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation new funding agency for research activity in province

On January 31, the Government of Saskatchewan established the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) to oversee health research initiatives in the province. This development grew out of the Action Plan for Saskatchewan Health Care, which also contained plans for a Health Quality Council to study health system quality issues. Previously, the two functions had been the responsibility of the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission (HSURC).

The new Foundation, located at 253 - 111 Research Drive, has a broad mandate that includes managing most of the province's health research investment, advising the government on strategic directions for health research, building funding partnerships, and disseminating the results of health research to health professionals and the public.

"The amount of money that we have available to grant is around \$2 million at this point," says interim CEO June Bold. "Our board will be making some decisions about new programming in the coming year, though, since we were fortunate to receive an increase in funding."

The agency specifically funds human health research, says Bold. "We cover a really broad spectrum, including basic bio-medical sciences, clinic research, health services research and population health." All funding is awarded through competitive peer-reviewed programs.

Funds are primarily designated for research being conducted at the province's two universities but may expand to include more community-based research. "Existing funding programs help to establish the careers of new faculty members, which helps recruitment in the province and helps our researchers to compete at the national level," says Bold. "Our core funding also includes post-doctoral fellowships."

Strategic initiatives are also in place to support researchers in the provinces who are pursuing national grants. "This helps to bring more national health research dollars into the

province and increase research activity in Saskatchewan," says Bold.

Board chair, Dr. Elizabeth Harrison, looks forward to her work with the new Foundation, noting that "Research plays a critical role in a quality health care system for Saskatchewan residents. In addition to leading to new disease prevention and treatment, a strong research environment is essential to attracting top health professionals and creating high quality academic experiences for students in a wide range of health related disciplines."

June Bold says "the Foundation is pleased with its new offices in Innovation Place, given the research and innovation focus. We hope to be here for a long time."

Health Quality Council

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care, but our province has beaten everyone to the punch and is leading the country with the establishment of a Health Quality Council for Saskatchewan," says Greg Basky, HQC communications officer.

The Health Quality Council builds on the successes of the Health Services Utilization and Research Commission (HSURC), a government-funded agency established in the fall of 1992 to assess Saskatchewan's health care system and make recommendations for evidence-based change. "A lot of the professional staff from HSURC carried forward to the Health Quality Council," says Basky.

In fall 2002, HSURC relocated from the former Planning Department at Royal University Hospital, to the Atrium Building at Innovation Place. "We had outgrown our offices within RUH and knew we were going to be expanding further. We looked at several sites, and found that space at Innovation Place was competitively priced and offered more of what we wanted - parking accessibility and convenient proximity to the U of S," says Thompson.

Research park firms among province's fastest-growing companies

In the February 2003 edition of Saskatchewan Business Magazine, three companies within the research park community of Innovation Place and Regina Research Park were ranked among "Saskatchewan's Fastest Growing Companies."

2 : BLACKSUN INC.

Location: 217 - 116 Research Drive, Innovation Place

Web hosting company, BlackSun Inc., has experienced phenomenal growth since opening the doors for business in 1998. According to Saskatchewan Business Magazine, BlackSun has recorded a 4,900 per cent increase in sales and has an annual growth rate of 1,666 per cent!

4: LOOSE FOOT COMPUTING

Location: 110 - 10 Research Drive, Regina Research Park

Loose Foot Computing Ltd. offers website hosting to small and medium-sized businesses. Saskatchewan Business reports that Loose Foot recorded a 1,103.7 per cent increase in sales, with an annual growth rate of 367.9 per cent.

#15: TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

Location: 350 - 10 Research Drive Regina Research Park

TMC is a total business solutions provider: designing and developing business application software, providing management consulting services, planning and implementing advanced networking technologies and providing ongoing technology support.

Saskatchewan Business reports the company chalked up a 66.7 per cent increase in sales, with an annual growth rate of 18.6 per cent.

Technology Management Corporation celebrates tenth anniversary

In 1993, three entrepreneurs had a vision to provide world-class software development, advanced networking, as well as information technology management consulting services to companies across the province, the country and North America.

They had all the right ingredients for the job and were accustomed to hard work. They were enthusiastic and thirsting to put their knowledge of cutting edge technologies to good use. All of these attributes have served them well in their quest to provide technical excellence and superior customer service.

All three of Technology Management Corporation's (TMC) original partners remain key players in this progressive and growing company. David Luterbach is President; Mike Hogan is Vice President of Technical Services; and Chris Taschuk is the Vice President of Software Services. Together, they've turned TMC into one of Saskatchewan's fastest growing businesses. They employ over 50 people and have offices in Regina, Saskatoon and Calgary.

TMC has been nominated for numerous awards, including the prestigious Canada Top 40 Under 40 awards which honors individuals who have become outstanding leaders in their chosen fields before reaching the age of 40. And, they were chosen Saskatchewan's Entrepreneur of the Year because of their drive for success and reputation for innovation.

Today TMC is a total business solutions provider. The company designs and develops business application software, provides management consulting services, plans and implements advanced networking technologies, and provides ongoing technology support services.

"Our growth has been steady," says Luterbach. "We did not jump on the 'dot com' bandwagon, but instead we focused on consistently delivering superior IT solutions for clients throughout

Saskatchewan."

TMC is an enthusiastic endorser of Saskatchewan as a place to do business, firmly believing that the province has a great reputation for being innovative and resilient.

"The cluster of smaller IT companies that have developed here in Saskatchewan have offered just as much or sometimes even a more focused expertise than the larger national firms," he insists. "We've built our company on the belief that there is a future for the young people of Saskatchewan. We participate in work experience programs for young people and hire technical school and university graduates from our local universities and colleges. As proof of our commitment to building the Saskatchewan IT sector, we were among the first private sector anchor tenants in Regina's Research Park."

In the past year, TMC has successfully completed several large projects that have continued to grow their reputation. They recently won the Queen's Jubilee Award for delivering a national Internet software application for the Canadian Cancer Society. They have also just completed new web sites for the Alberta College of Art and Design, the Regina Public Library and Tourism Regina.

On the software development side of their business, major projects in the last year included a contract management software application for the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership and a database application for the Saskatchewan Securities Commission.

In the technology deployment area, they delivered the entire Casino Moose Jaw infrastructure on budget and within a very tight project schedule. They also continued to deliver technical architecture and support services to the Government of Saskatchewan website hosting and electronic e-mail system at Saskatchewan Property Management

TMC has been nominated for numerous awards, including:

- **Canada Top 40 Under 40 awards honoring outstanding leaders in their chosen fields under age 40.**
- **Saskatchewan's Entrepreneur of the Year**
- **Saskatchewan's 15th Fastest-Growing Company (Saskatchewan Business)**

Corporation (SPMC).

"In almost all areas of the company we have expanded our service offerings to meet the changing needs of our clients," says Luterbach. "For example, in our software development unit, we have added additional creative staff to provide our clients with a total website development solution."

Luterbach says the Internet has added a lot of velocity to TMC's business. Around 1997, they began developing both consumer as well as business-to-business websites.

"A recent example of a business-to-business site is the one we developed for the Echo Valley Conference Centre. This site is data-driven, and is user-modifiable through a separate content management application," says Luterbach. "The client's goals were to improve awareness, provide on-line payment, and to increase revenues at the conference centre. We also recently developed a new flash website for Natural Lift System out of Calgary."

The future continues to look bright for TMC. The company expects to continue to grow their business aggressively with one satisfied customer at a time. And client satisfaction to this entrepreneurial company means consistently delivering successful projects on time, within scope and on budget.

updates

Investment brings Agrisoma to park

Ag-West Biotech Inc. has announced an investment of \$200,000 over two years to help establish Agrisoma Biosciences Inc. in Saskatchewan. Agrisoma is a new spin-off company of Chromos Molecular Systems Inc., a publicly-traded biotech firm, headquartered in Burnaby, B.C.

Agrisoma is developing and commercializing its chromosome-based gene transfer technology to enable the discovery and development of high value traits in crops, like grains with enhanced nutrition, and enable the production of proteins in plant-based systems. A major limitation of conventional gene transfer technologies is their restricted capacity to transfer large amounts of DNA, an important feature to enable crops to express multiple traits or large complex genes. Agrisoma's technology overcomes this barrier.

On the move...

Please note the following change of address: **MALLnet GLOBAL Corp.** is now located at 238 - 111 Research Drive (Atrium Building), Innovation Place.

Research land available

If you conduct crop research in the Saskatoon area, with your own field equipment, and you are in search of good, available farm land, contact Smigiel.projects@shaw.ca or Jim at 652-1579 (evenings). Several acres of non-irrigated summerfallow with good moisture levels for the spring of 2003 are available.

Preston project to improve access to park

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crossing. This summer's project will continue from the railway crossing to a point just north of 108th Street. The plan is to construct a four-lane roadway with a center median, with full left-turn bays at intersections. Traffic lights will also be installed at the Research Drive and Perimeter Road intersections," says Balon.

"Also on the road will be a bicycle lane, running north and south. There will also be a shared use pathway for both pedestrians and cyclists on the west side of Preston Avenue."

While some traffic delays may be created by the road work, construction will primarily take place east of the existing roadway. Construction crews will attempt to keep two lanes of traffic open during the project, to minimize any inconvenience.

The project is expected to alleviate the traffic bottlenecks that have resulted with the increase in traffic volumes since the opening of the Circle Drive interchange. Balon adds that city administrators also want to address projected increases in traffic volumes as Saskatoon's population continues to expand.

In 1997, an average of 9,100 vehicles per day utilized Preston Avenue between 108th Street and Research Drive, says Balon. "We have projected that those traffic volumes will increase by 60 per cent by the year 2050, based on an estimated growth in Saskatoon's population to 250,000 and full development of the research park."

Further options to alleviating traffic flow problems are being studied by a steering committee comprised of representatives from the University of Saskatchewan, Innovation Place, the Meewasin Valley Authority, city planners, a planning and landscape design specialist and a traffic consultant.

The committee is working on the Preston Avenue Widening Feasibility Study, which examines options suggested

in the U of S Core Area Master Plan.

The study calls for more controlled intersections along the Preston Avenue thoroughfare. A realignment of East Road and 108th Street has been proposed to create a four-way intersection with traffic lights, providing entrance to the U of S campus.

The proposal would also create a pocket of University land south of the existing Crop Science Field Lab, which could be utilized for research by the Colleges of Agriculture and Engineering.

"The realignment is something that the City wants to do in 2004, but there are still some funding details that have to be worked out with the University of Saskatchewan," says Balon.

The Master Plan also anticipates two new internal roadway connections between the U of S campus and Innovation Place. "There is a proposed connection between our Resources Row to the campus' Veterinary Road. It will be a nice internal link, so people traveling between the research park and the campus won't have to use Preston Avenue," says Tastad.

"At some point in the future there will also be a connection from our main traffic turnaround to Campus Drive. It's another improvement we're looking forward to."

Changes of address or other updates can be directed to: Wonda Kirychuk, Innovation Place, 114 -15 Innovation Boulevard, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 2X8, or call (306) 933-6581. Email: wkirychuk@innovationplace.com.

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