



## SAFER COMMUNITIES CLIENT FEATURE: CITY OF SASKATOON

# Leaders in Traffic Safety



As traffic safety leader in their province, the team at the City of Saskatoon Sign Shop has continued to impress local city councilors, senior management and fellow City employees with their commitment to safety and innovation. Operations Superintendent and leader of the Sign Shop, Jon Theobald, has played an integral role in transforming their team's approach to safety. Despite the solid foundation that existed when he arrived, Jon knew there was room for improvement. "Since my promotion into the Sign Shop in 2015, I recognised that we needed to bring our staff, equipment and the overall business into modern times. There was nothing drastically wrong with the way we executed our work, we just needed to embrace a more innovative and forward-thinking approach." That's where ATS Traffic came in.

Over the last four years, the ATS Saskatoon team has been working closely with the Sign Shop to ensure their unique needs and challenges are met with the right products and services. Working directly with local Account Manager Curtis Resch, Jon and his team bring forward ideas and we do our best to come up with the safest and most cost-effective solution. "Since I started working with Curtis four years ago, we have built a solid working foundation with ATS Traffic. His thought and effort dedicated to product research for our team has made a significant difference to the safety of our staff and the general public in Saskatoon."

Some examples of collaborative solutions include utilizing Truck-Mounted Message/Arrow Boards to improve safety and warn motorists during closures or line painting projects. Together they've come up with some creative approaches for electronic messaging to warn the public while keeping costs low - like towing a message board! Their use of specialized delineators and high visibility barricades has drastically improved driver compliance and reduced incidents at a particular site where regular impacts were occurring. Not only did their solution improve safety for drivers, but there were significant cost savings for the City and a drastic reduction in risk for staff.

The work happening at the City Sign Shop has been producing ripple effects throughout the rest of the city and the province alike. Using Pexco FG300 posts from ATS for a closure on a local freeway, for example was featured on the front page of the supplier's catalogue as it captured a correct set up, a professional look and effective use of the product. When the TM548 Message Board was used on City pilot trucks for lane closures, the province's Department of Highways investigated the same product for their own use.

This partnership and dedication to creating a safer community is an ongoing and increasingly collaborative one: "I meet regularly with their team to see how things are working, identify areas for improvement and come up with creative solutions for safer and more cost-effective work" says Curtis Resch, local ATS Account Manager. "Jon and his team have always expressed the importance of safety for their staff and the public, as well as finding economic tools to address their challenges. By having a close working relationship, we can align the City with emerging technologies so they can stay ahead of the curve while remaining within their budget."



## VER-MAC MESSAGE SIGNS

Over the years their team has obtained a large fleet of Ver-Mac truck-mounted, arrow and portable message boards. The City of Saskatoon was the first municipality in the province of Saskatchewan to utilize Ver-Mac's fleet management software JamLogic. Our team in Saskatoon helped to source a TM548 Truck-mounted Message Sign for the Shop's pilot trucks to use for lane closures. Using this technology has had a major impact on the behaviour of motorists when they come upon City staff maintaining the roads.

Approximately 900-1000 kilometres of lane, centre, and edge lines are painted annually within Saskatoon. Higher traffic locations are painted 2 to 3 times a year. This means City crews are out on the roads, increasing their own and the public's risk given their proximity to live traffic. The TM548 was used for the Shop's line painting truck to warn the public of fresh paint.

*The unexpected result?* Their team increased the volume of their spring lane marking program by 65% because they were able to paint areas that would normally need to be completed at night due to high traffic.

## OUTCOME

The City of Saskatoon Sign Shop has received consistently positive feedback from the public for the use of new products in detours and set-ups around the city, noting they have been more visible to drivers and have been more straightforward to follow. Shop staff and contractors alike have commented on the difference some of these products have made, citing a significant difference in the way the public treats their work zones and the overall improvement for their safety. Motorists also called in to comment how much more visible the new equipment is.

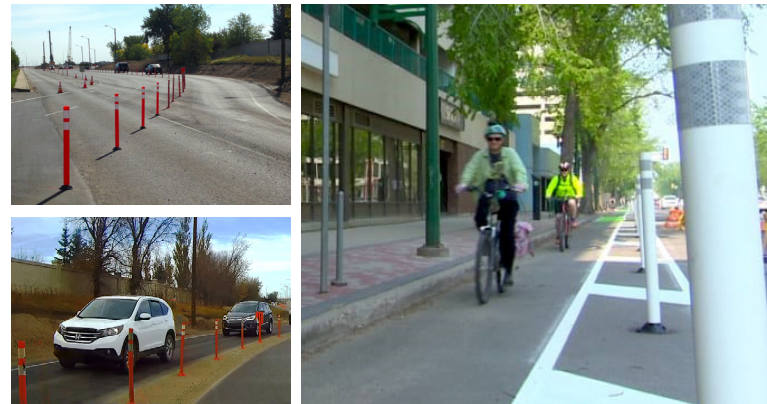
Last Fall, Jon visited ATS Traffic Headquarters in Edmonton to learn more about our Crash Attenuation Truck (pictured right). TMA's are mounted behind large trucks or on specially designed trailers to protect vehicles and workers in temporary lane closures. If another driver hits your vehicle, it won't be damaged, and it won't crash into your workers. Truck-mounted attenuators work best with heavier vehicles: the truck will roll forward when it's hit, but the vehicle's weight will reduce the distance.

**Up next:** Jon and his team will be collaborating with ATS Traffic on a redesign of the City's detour truck to allow the team to place traffic devices from the back of the vehicle. So far, they've gathered safety regulation information from provinces across the county, spoke with police traffic officers and put in a request for an exemption from the Ministry of Labor. Together, they plan to design and build a superior detour vehicle that has yet to be seen on North American roads.

## PEXCO: PROTECTED BIKE LANES & DETOURS

As part of the City of Saskatoon protected bike lane pilot project, city crews installed two new dedicated cycling lanes along Fourth Avenue from 19th to 24th Streets in September of 2018. The additions are an extension of the 23rd Street protected bike lanes which the city installed earlier.

Pexco posts were also used on several major freeway projects for detours, including set-ups on McOrmond Drive and College Drive.



## FEEDBACK

"As traffic safety leaders, I feel it is our duty to consistently revise the way we do business and look for product advancements and designs that ensure the safety of everyone on our roadways. We must evaluate our traffic management practices for planning and implementation to protect everyone from the folks working in construction zones to the motorists traveling through our city. With our current relationship with ATS Traffic and our local Account Manager, I feel very confident in saying we are drastically changing the way the City of Saskatoon completes and implements work zone safety through product design and innovation."

**Jon Theobald**  
**Operations Superintendent - City of Saskatoon**