

Heritage theme for new development

BY JAYNE FOSTER
STAFF REPORTER

A new residential subdivision going on the market this spring in Battleford, as well as a neighbourhood retail/commercial area which may come on line later, will feature a theme reflecting Battleford's historic significance, says the area's developer.

The theme starts with the name, says Dean Kupchanko of Swansea Capital Corp. of Calgary. He has named the subdivision Battleford West, taken from a nearly century year old marketing brochure for the area.

The 130-acre development will be located west of Highway 4 and north of Highway 40, and will begin with two subdivisions, one with 32 country residential estate lots named Country Estates and 36 executive sized lots in the area called Telegraph Heights. Battleford was once located on Telegraph Flats, hence the name of the new area. (See the story in the Friday, Jan. 11 *Regional Optimist* for a map and aerial view.)

His plan is to find street names from Battleford's history, such as Northcote Drive, after the steamer that

plied the Saskatchewan River at the time of the 1885 Resistance.

Kupchanko also hopes to develop a retail node, dubbed Old Towne Plaza. That portion could be two or three years away, depending on the initiative to twin Highway 4 from the Yellowhead to the Battle River Bridge.

In developing the retail area, Kupchanko plans to build on the historic theme.

Kupchanko wants to look to have "a certain oldness, a mix between western and heritage, . . . very much like what is taking place on main street Battleford."

He envisions the fresh look of new construction, but with the theme and character of historic significance.

"I don't want it to look like a walk in the past where you walk into a heritage village where people are churning butter. If there was a business, for example, like a Tim's (Tim Hortons), it's not going to be the same as the Tim store you see in the city, it's going to be more rustic, but still new and obviously high quality."

The same sort of look is intended for the residential area of the new subdivision. The plan calls for green space

and walking trails.

"People in this subdivision can walk the loop into the commercial area and back around through green spaces."

The high point is in the middle of the area to be developed, says Kupchanko, so the Country Estates lots will mostly face south and southwest, with lots of opportunity for walk-out basements and views of the Battle River valley. In the Telegraph Heights area, there will be views of the city of North Battleford and views of Battle River valley, either facing south or west.

There will also be a fence

built between Highway 40 and the residential area, he says. This, too, will be built with a historic theme, although its exact design has not yet been determined.

The residential area will be accessed from Highway 40 as well as 29th Street. The plan, he says, is for a swell to be installed on Highway 40 which will make access easy without slowing down traffic. The swell would include turning lanes for both east and west bound traffic.

Working with ReMax, Kupchanko will begin taking deposits on the residential lots April 3.

Strong market upgrade incentive: mayor

BY JAYNE FOSTER
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After a year in which Battleford issued \$9.3 million in building permits, more than twice the year before, the mayor says there is no need for the town to offer an incentive program for main street businesses to "update" their facades.

There's a lot of equity in the buildings due to the increase in property values, he says, and the attention applying a heritage theme to its downtown core will draw to the town should be incentive enough, considering the financial reward of attracting

more business.

Chris Odishaw is not alone in getting excited about putting a new face on main street. A number of local property owners are making plans for their buildings. Some are waiting to get a look at the mayor's project, the former Green Gables gift shop.

The building he and nine other investors have purchased is in the midst of its facelift, and StraightLine Builders, who will be moving into a building next door to the east, will be putting on a new "old" look on the former liquor store built in 1944.

The former Bank of Hamilton building at the east

end of the street is also undergoing revitalization (see the story on page 2).

The theme of the revitalization Odishaw would like to see is in keeping with the period style of the post office, town hall, the court house and the former 1912 bank, now home to the town's library.

Also on the south side of the street, Dana Karlson, owner of Pharmasave, says his building will also see some re-facading. He has had discussions with the mayor about the initiative and will be undertaking some work in the spring or the fall.

Farther down the block, Jack Mattila's building, which

houses 2nd Go Horse Tack and Salon Renaissance, built in 1980, will also see some upgrading. Mattila says it's nice to see somebody take the bull by the horns, referring to Odishaw's vision for main street. They will be looking into doing some work when the weather warms up.

Some of the push behind the incentive, Odishaw indicates, comes from discussions among individuals forming a downtown business association.

Dave Gloe at Home Hardware plans to get involved in the business association, but hasn't really looked into the idea of re-facading his business. Gloe stresses he hasn't ruled anything out.

The building that has become the offices of McKell Homes, a construction company busy with the recent housing boom in both Battleford and North Battleford, already fits in. It was originally built in 1910 as a law office and retains most of its original character.

Dustin Ellis, president of

McKell, says they hope to redo the roof on the awning this summer, and generally refresh the look of the building, including dealing with some graffiti.

A lot of work has been done on the interior.

"We put about thirty plus thousand on the inside."

Ellis is also a part owner of the building across the street, a former drug store which will become a bridal shop sporting a new heritage facade. He is one of the 10 investors in the building, along with the mayor.

The vacant early-century building which recently served as a scrapbooking store, owned for the last three years by Ray Schwab, is another building that will need little work to fit in with the theme. It still maintains its brick facade, although it has been painted. Schwab said when he replaced the windows, he fitted them to look like the originals. Originally Risdale's grocery and dry goods store, it may be best remembered in recent history

as Ross Green's hardware store. Schwab is offering the building for rent or lease.

John Joa of St. Walburg, owner of the building which is home to Lords and Ladies Hair Studio, operated by his daughter Julie, and relatively new tenant Battleford Agencies, has plans to do some improvements as well. It's not a historic building, but presently sports the rustic look a number of other buildings share.

Vera's Diner should be seeing some changes to its current rustic-look facade as well, says building owner Wes Wiebe. He, along with his son Rod and wife Vera, will be looking at doing some work in the spring, and will be checking out the facade of the bridal shop for some guidelines when they make their plans.

Other properties on main street have changed ownership and Odishaw is hopeful development by these new owners will be in keeping with the heritage vision for downtown.



Businesses on the north side of 22nd Street will be seeing some new looks in the near future as local business people join in the initiative to upgrade Battleford's main street to reflect the town's history. Photo by Jayne Foster

The brick-faced building many people still call the "old SaskTel building" on Battleford's main street is now home to McKell Homes. It was originally built in 1910 as a law office for W.W. (Billy) Livingstone, says the Battlefords North-West Historical Society.

Across the street, in the building which had served as the town's original post office (before the current post office was built in 1911-12), was the Bell Telephone Company. Livingstone was able to entice the telephone company to move across to his building, at about the time it was taken over by the Saskatchewan Telephone Company. Their office took up the east half of the top floor, and the west half was an apartment.

In 1907, Livingstone took Fred Atkinson, a Battleford school principal turned lawyer, into partnership, and then Walter Clink, son of D.L. Clink. After Atkinson passed away, Clink carried on until he was named a judge in 1948. It then became the law office of Donald A. Grant.

Uncovering the possibilities

Continued from Page 2
were there, but too far gone to refinish).

The apartment boasts three bedrooms, 9'6" ceilings, and lots of light through large windows. They hope to add another bathroom, as well. The upper floor has been used as an apartment for most of its life, having been added to the original building in 1910 when it became Dr. Ewart's office.

Eventually, they plan to do

interior work on the main floor, and maybe even the stone basement.

Inside, under layers of a century's worth of renovations to accommodate the Department of Indian Affairs (which moved the post office in 1940), such businesses as a grocery store (operated by Harold Florence, a long time town councillor, then by a Mr. Biddle), a clothing store operated by Jim Guedo, and, in more recent years, a hair

salon and insurance office, they have found treasures such as original light fixtures and coffered ceilings.

They have also found, and repaired, major energy inefficiencies, so the building is much warmer.

They also like the idea of adding lighting to the exterior, which would enhance signage, and highlight the new elements of the facade.

"There are just so many possibilities," says Andrew.

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