

Early Regina

With the planned arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the southern prairies, it was decided that the capital of the Northwest Territories (a very large area which at the time included the prairie provinces) should be moved south from Battleford. The new location for the capital was chosen at a spot where the future line would cross Wascana Creek. Land prospectors and optimistic settlers arrived and a "tent city" appeared on the prairie (shown c. 1882).



By 1886, Regina had its first town hall (left: d. 1906), located at the northeast corner of 11th Avenue and Scarth Street. Fitting for such a young and as yet undeveloped

town, the Town Hall filled a variety of roles, including police station and school, and housed public banqueting and meeting rooms as well as the town's fire engine.

Business continued to be conducted along South Railway Street, with many new buildings appearing, but as the town grew and an increasing number of services appeared, 11th Avenue and the north-south streets linking the two major roads became increasingly central to the life of the town.

In 1882, the first passenger train arrived at the settlement and new capital, called Pile O' Bones. The dignitaries on the train suggested "Regina", meaning "queen" in Latin, which they felt to be a more fitting name for a capital.

Before Regina was incorporated as a town in 1883, town business was conducted anywhere space could be found. This usually meant that the townspeople gathered in tents, churches, or stores (left, middle: carriage shop, c. 1890). Many of these earliest structures were situated along South Railway Street (now Saskatchewan Drive) (left, bottom: c. 1882), across from the town's very first railway station (left, top: c. 1897).



The first shack built in Regina, believed to be on Cornwall Street between South Railway Street and 11th Avenue, c. 1882.

Photos courtesy City of Regina Archives

Regina: An Illustrated History. J. William Brown. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1909.
Regina: The First 100 Years. William Argue, Paul Cowan, Gordon W. Stinson. London: Post Carbon Foundation, 2005.

Photos courtesy City of Regina Archives

Regina: An Illustrated History. J. William Brennan. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1989.

Regina: The First 100 Years. William Argan, Pam Cowan, Gordon W. Staseson. Leader-Post Carrier Foundation, 2002