
Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Greg Basky - Saskatoon Cycles - Opening More Road Space to Cyclists, Pedestrians to Support Physical Distancing - CK 270-1 X 6000-5

From: Greg Basky [mailto:]

Sent: Saturday, April 11, 2020 9:00 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Communication - Greg Basky - Saskatoon Cycles - Opening More Road Space to Cyclists, Pedestrians to Support Physical Distancing - CK 270-1 X 6000-5

Submitted on Saturday, April 11, 2020 - 20:59

Submitted by anonymous user: 207.47.175.4

Submitted values are:

Date Saturday, April 11, 2020

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Greg

Last Name Basky

Email

Address Mackenzie Crescent

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable) Saskatoon Cycles

Subject Opening more road space to cyclists, pedestrians to support physical distancing

Meeting (if known)

Comments

I am forwarding this Open Letter on behalf of the Board of Saskatoon Cycles. If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact me or our Board Chair, Cathy Watts ()

Open Letter to the City of Saskatoon 2020-04-11

We are a group of citizens from all walks of life. We are deeply grateful for the hard work of all our officials and essential workers during this trying time. While COVID-19 brings us daunting challenges and terrible tragedies, it also offers some unique opportunities. It is essential that, wherever possible and appropriate, everyone stays both physically and mentally healthy.

Many people are now finding they have a lot of time on their hands. This time can be used in ways that lead us to further physical and mental stress, or it can be a time to heal and discover what is important in life. Right now, more than ever, we need to make it possible to enjoy healthy diversions.

Playgrounds are closed, and organized sports and many other activities are rightfully on hold -- at a time when they're needed the most. The simple act of getting outside for a walk or a bike ride, whether it is to collect groceries or just to move around, is more than a selfish desire to escape the

four walls. Getting outside to exercise, as long as it is done safely, is our civic duty. We owe it to ourselves, our families, and our community, to keep ourselves healthy. Research shows that people who have access to fresh air, exercise, and nature are less susceptible to a range of diseases and conditions.

This is a very difficult time for the City of Saskatoon to coordinate both the fight against the virus and people's need to be outside in the fresh air. But we strongly feel the City must do even more to support safely distanced exercise and active transportation.

Here is a golden opportunity for the City to temporarily repurpose some of the space that is now dedicated to motor vehicles. Traffic is at unprecedented low levels. Many jurisdictions are experiencing a corresponding reduction in air pollution. The current volume of traffic simply doesn't justify the appropriation of so much of our city to motor vehicles. At the same time, pedestrians and cyclists, who are already allocated a thin sliver of roadways, are under orders to keep distant from one another.

Cities around the world have taken action. Close to home, our sister cities on the prairies have opened up more space, to enable people to get out and enjoy the fresh air and exercise they desperately need, while maintaining a safe distance from one another. In Winnipeg, they have opened up their annual bicycle and active transportation routes even earlier this year; on these four streets, vehicle traffic is limited to one block throughout the designated area. Calgary has fully or partially closed lanes in six prioritized locations to repurpose street space for walking/wheeled use. And Edmonton is adjusting two roads in busy and densely populated areas to provide more space to pedestrians and cyclists.

We ask that the City of Saskatoon adjust as many streets and roadways as is feasible, to accommodate more pedestrians and cyclists, and enable them to maintain safe physical distancing. These temporary routes could be open to local traffic, with speed restricted to 20 km/hr. Some specific locations for your consideration include:

- Spadina Crescent, from Whiteswan Drive to the Gordie Howe Bridge (to help ease pressure on MVA trails)
- Routes/corridors linking neighborhoods
- Routes/corridors connecting to grocery stores

Officials in some jurisdictions -- frustrated with the cavalier attitude of park and trail users -- have closed these areas completely. We hope this draconian step will not be necessary in Saskatoon. We support creating lanes with signage guiding people where to walk/cycle, in which direction, and reminders to maintain distance. Education is far better than deprivation. Most people now understand, and are practising, appropriate physical distancing.

We sincerely appreciate your hard work in this difficult time, and for your attention to our urgent appeal for public health.

Shawn Moen: Owner, 9 Mile Legacy Brewing

Tyler Rittinger: Teacher, Ecoquest Program / Host, Switching Gears Bike Radio

Candace Savage: Author and Community Activist

Todd Berg: School Principal, Ernest Lindner

Bertrand Bartake: Architect

Dwight Kirkpatrick: Educator Saskatoon Public School Division

Dr. Cathy Arnold: Director School of Rehab Medicine

Kira Judge: Economist
William Berg: Ecojustice Student
Barb Lafreniere: Certified Financial Planner
Brian Sawatzky: Hotelier
Ayoub Dangor: Anesthesiologist
Brenda Lougheed: Anesthesiologist
Olive Watts: Grade 7 student
Jeff Hehn: Instructor, Sask PolyTech
Ben Ralston: Lawyer, PhD student
Cathy Sproule: MLA Saskatoon Nutana
Dr. Kishore Visvanathan: Urologist
Alan Wallace: Urban Planner, Business consultant
Carol Greyeyes: Consultant for Gov't Agency
Cora Janzen: Health Promoter, Saskatchewan Health Authority
Anna Ringstrom: Landscape architect
Jim Siemens: Architect
Mike Winter: Walk Saskatoon
Angie Bugg: Engineer
Dr. James Arnold: Clinical Psychologist
Louise Jones Senior Activist
Miranda Jones: Visual Artist and Yoga Educator
Leona Theis: Author
Cathy Watts: Chairperson, Saskatoon Cycles, grandmother
Caitlyn Kirkpatrick: Student, University of Saskatchewan
Rod Orr: Active retiree, Cyclist, community volunteer

References:

<https://www.citylab.com/perspective/2020/03/coronavirus-bike-lane-emergency-transportation-covid-19/608725/>

<https://chi.streetsblog.org/2020/03/23/divvy-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-what-the-bike-share-system-is-doing-to-protect-riders-workers/>

<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/4/1/bicycles-shine-during-a-pandemic>

Attachments

open_letter_to_the_city_of_saskatoon.docx

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/webform/open_letter_to_the_city_of_saskatoon.docx>

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

