

Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Denise Balcaen - Proposed Victoria Ave Bike Path - between 8th St and Taylor St - CK 6000-5 x 7000-1

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2021 11:02 PM

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

Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Denise Balcaen - Proposed Victoria Ave Bike Path - between 8th St and Taylor St - CK 6000-5 x 7000-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED]

Submitted on Sunday, April 25, 2021 - 23:02

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Sunday, April 25, 2021

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Denise

Last Name Balcaen

Phone Number (306) [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED] 1st Street East

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code s7h [REDACTED]

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

Subject Proposed Victoria Ave. Bike Path - between 8th St. & Taylor St.

Meeting (if known) REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - April 26, 2021 @ 1pm

Comments I would like to speak at this meeting.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

City Council Meeting - Mon. Apr. 26 - 1pm. \$6,297,570.

Standard Policy Committee on Transportation - April 6

Thank you Council Members for allowing me to speak with regard to the proposed Victoria Ave. Bike Path today.

I have been a Buena Vista resident for over 35 years. I am an avid cyclist but not a huge fan of the Bike Paths I have experienced in Saskatoon. The Path currently installed on Victoria between 11th & 8th Sts. has not been a resounding success. It puts pedestrians & cyclists far too close together & I have personally had to move my grandson out of the way of a cyclist speeding down the pedestrian path because people were walking on the bike path.

& it is an accident just waiting to happen when people congregate at Homestead Ice Cream at Main St.

The first I personally heard of the bike path extension was a flyer delivered right in the middle Christmas flyer distribution. It advertised a community meeting on Dec. 7 - again so close to Christmas that most people, including myself, would not have had time to attend. I did view the meeting proceedings later & noted it was poorly attended - no surprise considering the Christmas season was in full swing. Also any mention of consideration of other streets were met with derision by the committee since the the committee had a 2015 Study in their hands that recommended otherwise. The next I heard was when

a neighbour distributed her flyer informing people the bike path would risk on street parking. The City claims everyone in the neighbourhood was consulted & informed. As a resident I know this is not true. Not everyone reads flyers, not everyone is comfortable using a computer, not everyone has the time or inclination to consult the City's confusing website, not everyone has the time (particularly at Christmas) to attend community meetings.

I don't normally get involved in community issues but felt compelled to. I personally flyered the proposed strip of 75 addresses informing them of a Petition I'd had started Jan. 27 to gain support for not having the Bike Path on Victoria but to encourage a serious look at using other nearby streets. I hoped to get maybe 60 people signing showing that at least the people along that strip do not want the bike path. I was amazed when it quickly reached over 300 signatures. It now sits at 592 & over 208 of those signatures occurred in the past few weeks. Remember - I only flyered those homes on Victoria Ave between 8th St. & Taylor St. Has the number skyrocketed because the Victoria Ave. Bike Path proposal was featured in the Star Phoenix newspaper - informing even more of the neighbourhood of what the City is planning? Is that why Option 4 is now under serious consideration after Option 1 was supposedly under serious consideration since April 14? I realize Petitions are not the end all & be all but I ask you with all seriousness how many people would take the time & trouble to sign a petition unless they were affected directly or indirectly?

As a side note - I personally know of 2 people that actually live on Eastlake Ave. that have signed.

Even tho' Option 4 seems to be the option of the day since parking will be maintained - it comes with it's own set of problems. Namely passengers exiting parked vehicles & entering the bike path - obviously dangerous. How would residents plug in vehicles over the winter across the bike path? I know for a fact - the City did not clear snow on the Victoria Ave. bike path from 11th ST. to 8th St at all this past winter. That left the sidewalks the only option for cyclists besides the road itself. What will happen to the quality of parking when the City neglects removing snow on the proposed section of Victoria Ave.?

The Active Transportation Study done over 5 years ago, did not consider other routes for the path - such as McPerson Ave. (which already has a set of traffic lights), Melrose Ave. & Eastlake Ave. These routes, while not as direct as Victoria Ave., would require a bit of jog of a block or two, offering quieter streets that have a lot less parking issues, are wider & would go directly past Queen Elizabeth & Buena Vista Schools to boot.

I have mistakenly assumed the Transportation Study should have focussed on planning a bicycle path that involves the least cost & disruption. This is definitely NOT the case.

I don't know anything about civic planning but I do know the cost & disruption would be INCREDIBLY less on one of these streets than over 6 million dollars for Option 4 on Victoria Ave.

I firmly believe to have a Bike Path on that stretch is a HUGE mistake. The fact the median must be narrowed for Option 4 speaks loudly that the street is not wide enough for both vehicle traffic & cyclists.

Other reasons for not wanting the bike path on this strip are as follows:

- the cost of Option 4 would be just OVER 6 million dollars - 6 million dollars, to install a Bike Path that is being hotly contested by the entire neighbourhood.
- Brand new long overdue curbing that was installed last summer will have to be torn out. Saskatoon taxpayers have to pay for that lack of City planning.
- property values will decline significantly because of the proposal on this section of street.
- what about people getting in & out of their vehicles already on a busy street - wouldn't any changes only add to that problem?
- access transit & anyone with mobility issues would be negatively impacted even with Option 4
- back alley access is already almost non existent in winter because alleys are not cleared regularly. I take great pride in being able to navigate my back alley only because I have 4 wheel drive & even then have gotten stuck!
- parking issues created on Victoria with ANY of the proposed options will definitely impact side streets. I personally have a registered home business where I have to rely on local street parking - have you ever had to drive down 1st street in the

middle of winter? There is no space to pass another vehicle in the opposite lane except to pull over & one to pass first. Then you want to add more parking issues? For single parent families, infill housing that rely on tenant parking?

I repeat - the City did a very poor job of notifying residents of the full scope of the Bike Path. There is a LOT of neighbourhood support to consider using one of the other 3 routes. If it means having to scrap the 2015 Transportation Study in order to consider the other 3 viable routes then I urge the City to take a step back & poll the entire affected neighbourhood in a manner they see fit other than flyers. Let's not be in such a hurry to create the Bike Path. Let's remember this is **6 million dollars** - to be possibly spent on a **7 block Bike Path** when that money could be going to much better uses such as proper housing for people that find themselves living on the street or any number of better uses.

Here is a link to the BUENA VISTA Community Association FB page about the Bike Lane - [https://
www.facebook.com/photo?](https://www.facebook.com/photo?)

[fbid=10164681405570370&set=p.10164681405570370](https://www.saskatoon.ca/engage/neighborhood-bikeways-project?fbclid=IwAR2Rg342b6MtVDLp1KEqgr7LufB600OEVe7uw8gNVA1xyM4R9SqqLhnDKz8)

Here is the link to the City's Proposal -[https://www.saskatoon.ca/engage/neighborhood-bikeways-project?](https://www.saskatoon.ca/engage/neighborhood-bikeways-project?fbclid=IwAR2Rg342b6MtVDLp1KEqgr7LufB600OEVe7uw8gNVA1xyM4R9SqqLhnDKz8)

[fbclid=IwAR2Rg342b6MtVDLp1KEqgr7LufB600OEVe7uw8gNVA1xyM4R9SqqLhnDKz8](https://www.saskatoon.ca/engage/neighborhood-bikeways-project?fbclid=IwAR2Rg342b6MtVDLp1KEqgr7LufB600OEVe7uw8gNVA1xyM4R9SqqLhnDKz8)