

September 7, 2022

Standing Policy Committee on Finance
Saskatoon City Council

RE: Funding Agreement with Discover Saskatoon

Dear Mayor Clark and Councillors,

Saskatoon is fortunate to have premier tourism and hospitality providers operating in our city. Their grit through the pandemic – where travel, events and gatherings were curtailed by public health restrictions – demonstrated how strong, creative and capable they are. They are essential contributors to our business community and will play a big role in our economic recovery.

Now that public health restrictions have lifted across Canada, major cities and their tourism sectors are driving hard to recover lost ground and revenue. Saskatoon faces stiff competition as every other western Canadian city looks to capitalize on pent-up demand for business and leisure travel, conferences, athletic competitions, concerts and special events.

As you contemplate renewal of the City's funding agreement with Discover Saskatoon, we urge you to look favourably on its proposal and invest in the capacity it needs to help Saskatoon compete and win.

An investment in our visitor economy means:

- Optimizing the utilization and revenue generation of current and future civic facilities
- Paving the way for the success and sustainability of Saskatoon's future entertainment district and facilities
- Creating good entry-level jobs and career paths for hundreds of local residents
- Positioning Saskatoon as a preferred destination for skilled professionals who value quality of life experiences and amenities
- Helping Discover Saskatoon achieve tour operator status and the opportunity to generate source revenue and reduce its overall impact on the mill rate

Without an investment in the short-term, our long-term competitiveness and relevance as a major western Canadian destination will hang in the balance – as will the millions in economic benefits visitors bring to our city each year.

Thank you for considering Discover Saskatoon's management and marketing plan and an investment in the future of our visitor economy. As Saskatoon's voice for business, and biggest business network, we stand ready to work with you to ignite a new era of economic renewal and prosperity for our community.

Sincerely,



Jason Aebig
CEO

Cc: Stephanie Clovechok, CEO, Discover Saskatoon