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**Subject:** Email – Communication – Millie Leard - Proposed changes to Montgomery – CK 6330-1 x 6001-1

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**From:** Gough, Hilary (City Councillor) <[Hilary.Gough@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:Hilary.Gough@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Sent:** Friday, September 9, 2022 3:18 PM

**To:** Millie <[REDACTED]>; Web E-mail - City Clerks <[City.Clerks@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:City.Clerks@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Subject:** Email – Response – Hilary Gough - Proposed changes to Montgomery – CK 6330-1 x 6001-1

Hello Millie,

My apologies for the delay in responding here.

I appreciate you reaching out. I share your rail delay safety concerns and want to share with you a bit of background on this issue and a proposal to improve access to Montgomery, rather than reduce it – the results of that rail study (and an 11<sup>th</sup> St overpass) is key.

There is a lot of background on this highly complex file. Your message suggests you've engaged with it pretty fully, so I won't include much of that here. I have however, made a [video](#) (~15mins) that summarizes the project and impacts on Montgomery specifically – showing some of it visually. There's also a blog post on my [site](#).

Returning to the access question, based on the feedback I've received and my best assessment of a way forward that is beneficial to Montgomery, my intention at this time is to achieve Council support to pair-up the West Circle Drive project with the 11<sup>th</sup> Street overpass project. My goal would be to ensure that the Circle Drive West reconfiguration, including the reconfiguration of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street exit doesn't proceed without an 11<sup>th</sup> Street overpass also being constructed. All things considered, I think this is a very strong path forward and presents a huge opportunity to build momentum behind the complete solution to rail delays and related safety issues that residents in Montgomery have been calling on the City to address for decades. I'll expand on this below. So far, I'm hearing a fairly high level of support for this from City administration and Council colleagues. For more context about what we are doing and can do in the meantime about rail delays and safety I've included additional info at the bottom of this message.

As you've likely read, the original scope of the study did not extend as far south as 11<sup>th</sup> Street West. This intersection became implicated when the plan to keep an exit from Clancy stretched too far south and got too close to the existing 11<sup>th</sup> Street exit. These two movements taking place so close to one another create safety issues. For a comparable example, think of the proximity of the entrance and exit on Hwy 11 @ Hwy 16 when re-entering the City from the south. The 'weaving distance' here is tight and too close. It causes lots of confusion and safety issues. The City has developed a plan to reconfigure this intersection in the medium-long term. So, given that the removal of the lights at Clancy was the core goal of the project, and therefore an exit ramp/lane from Clancy was a requirement of the project, it was then determined that a new configuration for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street exit would need to be considered in order to accommodate the Clancy ramp. This insufficient weaving distance is why maintaining the existing ramp while also creating the new one is not viable.

As you've suggested, rail delays will be a much bigger concern with the new exit. There are twice as many train blockages at 11<sup>th</sup> street than at Dundonald, and that the duration of those blockages is, on average, 1:47 longer than those at the existing exit. I am not satisfied with this outcome and am hearing that you and others are not either.

So, my intention is the following:

- Pair the 11<sup>th</sup> Street overpass project with the Circle Drive West project. I have engaged the Transportation department, who do not oppose this. It has been confirmed that the two projects do not conflict and can be

complimentary. There's some background about that overpass project in the [FAQ](#) as well, but I'll share some info here too. Pairing these projects will require support from my Council colleagues.

- [Here's](#) a copy of the high level idea that we have at this point for the 11<sup>th</sup> overpass. As you'll see, constructing that overpass was going to require reconfiguring the 11<sup>th</sup> Street exit in the same way that is proposed above, but with an overpass over rail, those delay concerns would be eliminated. Constructing this overpass along with the other changes along circle drive west could be the end of Rail delays for residents in Montgomery Place, and for future residents in neighbourhoods that may be constructed to the west in the distant future. I explain the two projects side by side in the [video](#) at 08min25.
- Finally, I intend to explore whether there might be more elegant designs for that overpass that we could explore. The one I've linked above has been adopted in principle only and was developed as a concept to be redeveloped closer to construction. I think exploring more options sooner would help us to make sure these projects will really have the benefit we want and will help to reduce some of the downsides of an overpass. Overpasses raise traffic in the air, and also require land for ramps and more. Taking some time to design this one as well as possible could reduce some of those impacts.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts about my proposed approach and any concerns, ideas, or questions you might have. I've included the Clerk's office here with a request to ensure your comments go to the Transportation Committee when they receive the Circle Drive West plans.

Thanks again for reaching out.

All the best,  
Hilary

*Additional note regarding rail delay and safety concern efforts:*

*Recent ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) projects have been installed to mitigate some of the risk associated with emergency service access being cut off when the rail crossings are blocked. The project provides the Fire Department real time information about when the crossing at 11th Street is blocked allowing dispatchers to more efficiently and effectively direct trucks to respond in Montgomery Place and better ensure timely response. This will not mitigate the situation wherein both access routes into the neighbourhood are blocked. Fortunately, this is uncommon, and in a major response, or a 'two-alarm fire' they will send trucks each route to ensure at least one is unlikely to be delayed. I also believe that there are improvements to rail operations that could further reduce the situation where both entrances are blocked, and am working to push for this. All of this said, I understand that many feel that the issue is not fully addressed until a physical solution is in place (over/under pass or rail moved). This is why I initiated including the 11<sup>th</sup> Street overpass on the Transportation Infrastructure List for future consideration/funding/construction.*

*For interest, the ITS system bleeds over into public access and convenience as well. You've likely noticed the signage on roads leading up to that intersection warning drivers when the intersection is blocked by a train in hopes that alternative routes can be chosen. There is also work happening to consider whether a broader public communications tie-in might be feasible - I don't have any detail to provide on that at this stage. At last budget, there was a project that wasn't going to be funded to continue the ITS work on rail safety. I asked the fire department to come to budget to speak to the importance of this work and I moved a motion to add the item to the list of funded projects. It was successfully funded. I remain committed to incremental improvement like this before a full solution can be achieved in the future.*

Hilary Gough (she/her)  
City Councillor  
Ward 2, Saskatoon  
306-975-3672

-----Original Message-----

From: Millie <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Saturday, August 20, 2022 10:30 AM  
To: Gough, Hilary (City Councillor) <[Hilary.Gough@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:Hilary.Gough@Saskatoon.ca)>  
Subject: Proposed changes to Montgomery

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I guess I have concerns about the exit from circle drive being closed into Montgomery.

If Clancy is the issue then maybe the city should focus on their current exits to circle drive from Clancy. But Clancy already can exit from Clancy going North and South. They use the exit Montgomery people use to go North and South already. So really what is the issue? Why spend unnecessary dollars.

The city would never do a plan like this in a East side neighbourhood of the city. So why on the West side of the city? The city already did an exit from circle drive into fairheaven neighbourhood just to get to 22nd street. That is terrible.

Before spending money on these changes - maybe the railroad relocation plan should be assessed first or a overpass so the emergency vehicles can access Montgomery. When no time limit is indicated I would take that if these changes are made then the relocation of the railroad will ever come to light. This way dollars and be allocated to the railroad relocation plan.

Please pass on my concerns as well to the City Transport Committee.

Sent from my iPhone