

To mayor Clark and
councillors.

Please think - and
~~do not~~ remind your-
selves that these
letters are a small
drop of the citizens
of Saskatoon, who
have the same
opinions. Please
reconsider the people
who can barely make
it financially now
and remember that
we can't have every-

now and worry about
payments later.

We must not continue
this way. Remember
you are not wasting
and over spending
your own money, but
the money of the citizens
of Saskatoon, who
trusted you.

I am greatly disappointed
at what you have done
and you are apparently
totally unrepentant.

Yours Truly

Doris E. Peters.

Taxpayer money not city hall property

So city council wants to increase the taxpayers' tax burden to cover their horrible financial controls of spending our money? Solution: no library, no downtown entertainment centre ... hmm. No debt. Get your heads straightened out, you guys. Remember, it's the citizens' money, not city hall's!

Don Parenteau, Saskatoon

Arena responsible for financial hole

Only a few months ago councillors proclaimed that a new arena could be built without tax increases. However, we now find ourselves faced with tax increases of up to 18.6 per cent in 2024, actually more if you add in the cost of the green cart program.

Present projections are for around a \$52-million revenue gap for 2024. About \$25 million of this could have been avoided by not purchasing downtown land for the arena. But wait, councillors will be saying, that money came from the sale of city-owned land (mainly new home lots), not taxes.

Yes, but council could have used that same money to pay for any number of other capital items in next year's budget. In fact, reserve money was used to help balance the budget in other years. Some councillors think it was

irresponsible of administration to release preliminary budget projections with large shortfalls.

However, these projections are the consequences of councillors' own actions, notably their preoccupation with a second arena.

Jonathan Naylor, Saskatoon

City hall to blame for big shortfalls

Mayor, council and city managers: Look for new jobs. You are obviously not fit to manage what has been entrusted to you. Surprise, we have a shortfall of \$75 million (\$52.4 million next year and \$23.2 million in 2025). You are responsible for the shortfall. Now find a way to resolve it, other than raising taxes again.

Would you run your own business not knowing what you owe? Not for long. We now need referendums on all major projects as these spendthrifts cannot control

their desires. Now, needed infrastructure will have to be paused, so your project dreams had better also be stopped. This includes the library and arena.

It's a lame excuse that the pandemic caused this, while other cities went through the same pandemic and we are led to believe they came through stronger. There are lots of things that could be done, but we have to do what must be done.

Allan Isted, Saskatoon

Councillors can't be trusted with taxes

In the June 17 StarPhoenix, there were two excellent letters written by Jonathan Naylor (Arena responsible for financial hole) and by Allan Isted (City hall to blame for big shortfalls).

I have previously written to the StarPhoenix about his ongoing trend of mismanagement of our tax dollars, and spending has ballooned to an increase of \$52.4 million for 2024 and another \$23.2 million for 2025. Council and administration believe themselves to be infallible.

Their systemic and self-serving behaviour have made them experts in incompetent planning and decision making. This behaviour must be eradicated.

Here are some previous articles justifying this claim. In the June 4, 2022, StarPhoenix, it was reported that a 3.5 per cent tax hike would

provide for snow clearing. Instead of doing a proper audit of all its services to find savings, the city chose to maintain the status quo.

In the Aug. 17, 2022, StarPhoenix, the city is reporting a "\$6.5-million deficit for 2022" with a proposal of "dipping into reserves and moving capital funds into the operating budget," a shell game of diverting funds. Taxpayers cannot trust this council and administration!
Ron Niekamp, Saskatoon

Elected reps should ride off on bike lanes

All those in favour of Saskatoon city council approving additional bike lanes stretching from 45th Street west along Avenue C to the river — please say aye.

The silence is deafening. With a projected deficit of \$75 million over the next two years, I still think this project is worth considering.

The addition of this expensive bike path would allow the mayor and council to pedal their fiscally irresponsible butts to the airport after they lose the upcoming election. All those in favour of cleaning house at city hall — say aye.

Ross Edward Nykiforuk, Saskatoon

Council selective about seeking input

I find it ironic that public input is being solicited on proposed boundary adjustments from residents who only managed less than 28 per cent voter turnout in the 2020 civic election.

Yet our elected officials continue to turn a deaf ear to residents who have repeatedly requested a referendum on a proposed new arena/entertainment district potentially costing hundreds of millions of dollars while projecting a \$52-million deficit.

Is this irony? You decide.
Arnold Cote, Saskatoon

Extra charges for waste unwelcome

I moved into Saskatoon in 2009; since then my taxes, almost without fail, have risen by almost double the rate of inflation. At first, I assumed there was some catch-up on infrastructure and was not concerned. But the increases keep coming and the city keeps spending, totally disregarding the concerns of taxpayers.

But it gets worse. When I moved into the city I had a container for recycling, which I periodically took to the recycling centre on Attridge Drive. My cost was zero. Then the city decided we all needed our own container, which now costs almost \$10 per month.

More recently the big spenders in city hall decided we all need a green cart at a cost of approximately \$6 per month. The problem is I have a garburator for my wet garbage and I mulch my grass clippings. It would take me several years to fill this bin if I chose to use it.

Yet I have no choice; I am stuck with a large container I have no space for and a cost I definitely do not appreciate. We do not need extra from our city administration; we need to end the waste and mismanagement and, hopefully, after the next election, bring in a new mayor and council.

Dan Bachman, Saskatoon