

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Urgent: Request for Inclusion in City Council Meeting Agenda - Connecting Avenue C
Attachments: NSBA Letter regarding Avenue C Bike Lane - December 4.pdf
Importance: High

From: Daniel Afe <Daniel.afe@nsbasask.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:48 PM
To: Web E-mail - City Clerks <City.Clerks@Saskatoon.ca>
Cc: Titemore, Adam <Adam.Titemore@Saskatoon.ca>
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Good afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well. Earlier this month, the NSBA had the opportunity to present to the Standing Policy Committee regarding the Connecting Avenue C project, which was then moved to the Dec 20 City Council Meeting.

On Friday, Dec 18, I submitted our initial letter and a new request to speak regarding this issue on behalf of Mr. Keith Moen, the Executive Director of NSBA. However, upon checking the updated agenda, I was surprised to discover that our submission and request were not included.

I understand that the deadline for agenda submissions is Monday, which we have never missed, but I am confident it was submitted well within the specified timeframe.

I sincerely appreciate your attention to this matter and would be grateful for any assistance you can provide in rectifying this oversight.

I have attached our initial letter to this email and hope Keith can get a spot to speak.

Thank you for your time and understanding,

Daniel

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Research and Policy Analyst

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December 4, 2023,

Standing Policy Committee on Transportation
222 3rd Ave. N.
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

Dear Standing Policy Committee,

Re: Concerns Regarding the Proposed Bike Lane on Avenue C

On behalf of the NSBA – Saskatoon's Business Association, I am writing to express our continued concerns regarding the proposed bike lane on Avenue C from Spadina Crescent West to 45th Street West, as outlined in the recently released administrative report.

As an organization, we understand and support the City's commitment to enhancing active transportation options for the community. However, our stance remains the same – the identified route for the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling route is not suitable for various reasons, and we urge the City Council to reconsider this project.

The latest administrative report reveals information that further solidifies our reservations about the proposed bike lane route. The estimated project cost of \$8,793,597 is already a significant burden on the City's strained finances. Another major financial concern lies in the implementation cost from 38th Street to 45th Street, with a total cost of \$4,342,476, which we find to be steep. The report explicitly states that these estimates do not include the cost of property acquisition for the additional right-of-way required. In these challenging economic times, pursuing a project with such a substantial financial burden is unwarranted, considering the funding model for the project is yet to be identified by the City.

Moreover, the proposed project is expected to result in the removal of 35 paid on-street parking spaces, constituting nearly an 11% reduction in the paid parking supply in the Riversdale BID. This translates to an estimated annual revenue loss of approximately \$68,000 and a decrease of about \$34,000 per year to the BID Streetscape Reserve. The economic implications are substantial and should not be taken lightly, especially when many businesses are already facing financial challenges and increased property taxes.

In our previous communication, we highlighted safety concerns, citing the annual report of the Saskatoon Police Service's traffic unit, which reports five intersections in Saskatoon that accounted for 110 collisions. Avenue C North and Circle Drive West intersection being number one, accounting for 27 crashes. Between 2018 and 2021, the Avenue C and Circle Drive intersection consistently ranked in the top five for the highest number of collisions, totalling 217 incidents, according to SGI's data.

We also noted the lack of awareness among our members and businesses in the north end about the public engagement conducted in the fall of 2022. We would like to stress that communication is paramount in such matters, and we believe that the City should distribute adequate information with enough time to ensure that all stakeholders are well-informed and have an opportunity to provide input.

In conclusion, the NSBA reiterates its stance that Avenue C is not a suitable location for an AAA cycling route. Considering the financial strains faced by the City, the safety concerns highlighted in the police report, and the potential adverse economic impact on local businesses, we strongly urge the City Council to reconsider this project. We encourage further dialogue with stakeholders and businesses to explore alternative solutions that align with the community's needs and priorities.

A solution and a route can likely be found, just not on Avenue C, particularly intersecting with Circle Drive and northward.

Sincerely,



Keith Moen
Executive Director