

Rafiqui Enterprises Ltd

(Operating as)

Savor Supermarket

#2-1902 8th St E, Saskatoon SK (S7H 0T7) | 901-B 22nd St W, Saskatoon, SK (S7M 0R9)

November 22, 2023

His Worship, Mayor Charlie Clark
and Members of City Council
Saskatoon City Hall 222 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon SK S7K 0J5

Dear Mayor Clark and Council Members:

Re: 2024-25 City of Saskatoon Budget

I am writing to you with respect to the upcoming budget deliberations that City Council has scheduled for next week.

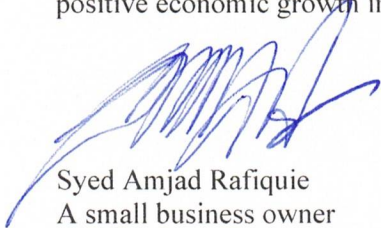
In June, the City of Saskatoon publicized that the projected 2024 City budget deficit would need an 18% property tax increase in 2024 to be funded. Over the past months, Council and Administration have worked to put forward a budget that has a smaller funding deficit than was originally publicized. Thank you for your work to reduce the original budget shortfall. A tax increase of that magnitude would have grinded Saskatoon to a halt, however the proposed 7.14% property tax increase for 2024 is still much too large. Please reduce spending in the budget to achieve a lower tax increase.

I use to own and operate four businesses in Saskatoon which are now reduced to two only. It has become very difficult to operate a business in Saskatoon due to high operating costs with smaller number of populations. Minimum wage has gone up, utility cost is so high and with this much high tax increase it will be pushing small businesses to shut down. As a small business owner, I feel like we are getting pushed to our limits and cannot handle further cost increases.

Saskatoon is becoming an expensive city to operate in. I strongly urge you, to reduce the City of Saskatoon budget in the most aggressive way possible in order to prevent having to increase property taxes to anywhere close to the 7.14% that administration is recommending.

I realize that you are tasked with many difficult decisions but there is an opportunity, through your leadership, to achieve a final budget that has the need for a much smaller property tax increase. Please, focus on reducing spending rather than increasing taxes to offset higher levels of spending.

Thank you for your service to our community and for the measures that you have already taken to reduce the potential 2024 property tax increases. The business community looks forward to a final budget that focuses on the City "staying in its lane" by providing only services that are essential to running an effective City and the low property tax increase that is needed for continued business viability and positive economic growth in Saskatoon.



Syed Amjad Rafiquie
A small business owner