

Lasby, Mary

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Nicole Burgess - Neighbourhood Character Protection Report - CK 750-4
Attachments: Letter to PDCS on Neighbourhood Character Protection.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 9:55 AM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Nicole Burgess - Neighbourhood Character Protection Report - CK 750-4

--- Replies to this email will go to ceo@saskatoonhomebuilders.com ---

Submitted on Monday, March 4, 2024 - 09:51

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Monday, March 04, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: She/her/hers

First Name: Nicole

Last Name: Burgess

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: [REDACTED]

Email: ceo@saskatoonhomebuilders.com

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: 17-102 Cope Cres.

Ward: Ward 7

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Saskatoon & Region Home Builders' Association

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: March 6 - SPC-PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - PUBLIC

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 7.3.1 Neighbourhood Character Protection Report

Comments:

Comments provided

Attachments:

- [Letter to PDCS on Neighbourhood Character Protection.pdf](#)234.62 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No



March 4, 2024

Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development & Community Services
222 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon SK S7K 0J5

RE: Feedback on 7.3.1 Neighbourhood Character Protection Report [GPC2023-0503]

On behalf of the Saskatoon & Region Home Builders' Association, I wish to provide comments to the Housing Accelerator Fund report regarding *Neighbourhood Character Protection*, which was provided in response to a motion made by Councillor Block at City Council's Regular Business Meeting on November 22, 2023, "That Administration report back on options to protect the character of existing neighbourhoods..." This motion around "character" was related to the two additional initiatives required under the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) that would allow for "as-of-right" development for up to four residential units on a property in all residential zoning districts city-wide; and the permitting of four storey multiple-unit development within 800 metres of rapid transit. We would like to thank Councillor Block for her support of Saskatoon housing initiatives and for her heartfelt concern regarding the character of our established older neighbourhoods.

As noted in the report, "there is no consensus on what constitutes neighbourhood character or which elements of neighbourhood character should be protected." With that said, as further outlined, even upon implementation of the two initiatives committed to by City Council under HAF, which would allow for increased height and density within the defined areas, there are still many other tools at the City's disposal to control some elements of neighbourhood "character," if they see fit. **While these tools are available, we strongly support administration's assessment, that any consideration to add additional policies or restrictions (to the already limiting infill regulations currently in place) in the name of "character" protection, would only serve to add cost and limitations for both the city and builders, and would ultimately contradict the intent of removing barriers to the development of more housing.**

Instead of focusing on how character can be defined and protected, we urge this committee and council to instead focus on the substantial benefits that these zoning bylaw changes will have for much needed housing in our city, including, but not limited to, enhanced municipal competitiveness, revitalization of ageing neighbourhoods, promotion of diversity and inclusivity, modernization of housing, and advancement of environmental objectives.



By changing our existing outdated and restrictive policies that govern redevelopment in older neighbourhoods, we will better meet our increasing housing demand, better safeguard our eroding housing affordability and:

- Boost the city's appeal to investors and skilled individuals by offering diverse and affordable housing, stimulating economic growth.
- Revitalize older neighbourhoods with new residents, businesses, and improved public spaces.
- Encourage a diverse resident demographic, fostering community and inclusivity, and social inclusiveness through diverse housing options. Many industry experts agree that outdated policies often discriminate against diverse populations.
- Replace outdated structures with energy-efficient homes, aligning with climate goals.
- Maintain historical and cultural elements while integrating new developments.
- Address the "missing middle" in housing, providing affordable options for a broader demographic.
- Promote gentle density, preserving neighbourhood character while meeting housing needs of a growing city.
- Support neighbourhood evolution, ensuring their adaptability and sustainability.
- Stimulate infill development by decreasing red tape and enhancing urban efficiency through modalities of active transportation.

One thing we know is that change is constant. All neighbourhoods must continually change and grow, and this is especially critical in older "character" neighbourhoods. If we don't attract new and more diverse residents into urban neighbourhoods, we know that unmitigated suburban growth will bring its own challenges for our city planners.

In conclusion, allowing increased height and density in older neighbourhoods is not intended to ruin "character," threaten property values or destroy heritage, but instead is a critical step towards a more inclusive, affordable, and vibrant Saskatoon. It aligns with our goals for sustainable growth and community development, ensuring our city remains competitive and attractive. Embracing these changes not only addresses housing affordability but also adopts progressive urban planning principles that enrich our community.

We thank you for your support and urge continued collaboration with industry to leverage the HAF's potential fully, advancing housing affordability and responding to our city's growing housing demand.

Sincerely,



Nicole Burgess, BA, CAE
Chief Executive Officer