
From: Web NoReply
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 4:51 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Email - Communication - John Krowina - Saskatoon Freeway Planning Study – Phase 2 Endorsement Request - CK 6003-1

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Submitted on Monday, February 5, 2024 - 16:51

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

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, February 05, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: He/him/his

First Name: John

Last Name: Krowina

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Adelaide St E

Ward: Not Sure

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Meeting of Standing Policy Committee on Transportation

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: whether or not to endorse the Phase 2 functional design report for the Saskatoon Freeway

Comments:

Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on this important question.

I agree with the Swale Watchers and ask that this Committee adopt Option 1, namely, to not adopt the Functional Planning Study.

It was well-known from Day One that the Saskatoon Freeway, as planned by the Province, would be an unmitigated disaster for the Swales. Past requests by the Swale Watchers and other concerned groups and individuals, including myself, to either abandon the project or to move it to a location where it would not be fatal to the ecological integrity of the Swales, were as a rule simply not even acknowledged.

This contempt for the Swales, and for those who gave so generously of their time and expertise to assist in designing a City that is a win-win for the public interest, in terms of meeting the needs of development and for environmental protection and sustainability of the special places that surround Saskatoon, demonstrates conclusively that such consultations as have been taken so far, have been wholly inadequate. The people of Saskatoon deserve a reboot of the whole consultative process.

More than this, the previous refusal to address the possibility of moving the Freeway, or the question of whether it is even needed, is tantamount to an admission that yes, it will have this disastrous impact on the Swales. Despite this, it appears that the plan remains to blunder on ahead and ram it through, notwithstanding. The public interest of the residents of Saskatoon deserves much better than this.

It was tremendously heartening last year when Council showed great enthusiasm for extending more protection for the Swales than was recommended by the administration. Sadly, we are facing the same situation again. For this Committee to approve the Study would undo the good work and intentions that Council has recently shown in relation to the Swales.

There is no question that a massive highway project running through the middle of an ecologically sensitive area will cause irreversible damage to that area. This occurs through fragmentation, noise, excessive light, simple loss of habitat, and general degradation of the area involved.

To endorse the Freeway despite these clear impacts will contradict and call into question not only previous efforts to protect the Swales, but the whole commitment of the City to setting aside and protecting green space, recreational areas and ecologically-sensitive areas.

Other problems with the Freeway consist of the astronomical cost and the fact that it is not needed and may not ever be needed. In contrast to the lack of need for the highway is the very real need of the Swales for a level of protection that is appropriate to their value and significance.

In fact, the Swales are of such importance that, on a rational consideration, only the most urgent and necessary works in the public interest should ever be allowed to damage or ruin them. Not only that, but this should be permitted to occur only after all other alternatives to avert or reduce this damage have been comprehensively considered and have been found unworkable.

It is clear that evaluating the Freeway project through this kind of matrix has never occurred. The Freeway is neither necessary nor urgent. Nor have alternative options been seriously canvassed or put forward by the relevant authorities.

It is for all these reasons that I ask that this Committee stand up for the interests of the people of Saskatoon, their children, and their children, in order to ensure that special places like the Swales remain forever.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

John Krowina
Saskatoon

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