

Thompson, Holly

From: Web NoReply
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 1:49 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Email - Communication - Roger Petre - Saskatoon Freeway Planning Study – Phase 2 Endorsement - CK 6003-1
Attachments: RCE SK Letter Re Northeast Swale March 2024.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed
Categories: FILED

--- Replies to this email will go [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, March 4, 2024 - 13:44

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: He/him/his

First Name: Roger

Last Name: Petre

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: Yes

Address: c/o Luther College 3737 Wascana Parkway

Neighbourhood: [Don't know / Unsure](#)

City: Regina

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: S4S [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development Saskatchewan

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: March 4

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Functional Planning Study for Phase 2 of Saskatoon Freeway

Comments:

See attached letter

Attachments:

- [RCE SK Letter Re Northeast Swale March 2024.pdf](#) 445.4 KB

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



RCE REGIONAL CENTRE
OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
SASKATCHEWAN



www.saskrce.ca

March 4, 2024

To City of Saskatoon Standing Policy Committee on Transportation,

We are writing to you today in favour of the Swale Watchers recommendations which state:

1. Given that the Biological Assessment and the Functional Planning Study for Phase 2 of the Saskatoon Freeway demonstrate that irreversible harm would befall the Northeast and Small Swales –two of Saskatoon’s most valuable and valued natural areas—if the project proceeds as planned, we urge you NOT to endorse the Functional Planning Study for Phase 2 of the Saskatoon Freeway.
2. Recognizing that the ultimate authority over where, when or if this project is completed lies with the province, rather than with the City of Saskatoon, we urge you to call on the Government of Saskatchewan to choose a route for the Saskatoon Freeway that does not intrude on the Swales and to guarantee that the project will be subject to a thorough, impartial Environmental Impact Assessment.

By way of background, RCE Saskatchewan is a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) acknowledged by the UN University in 2007.¹ Our RCE brings together scholars and community practitioners dedicated to researching and advancing ESD. The 170+ RCEs around the world work to advance the UNESCO Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP).² We see education for sustainable development as essential in achieving the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are intended to guide the global development agenda through to 2030.³ As part of our mandate, we share information and education about our local responsibilities in relation to Canada’s global sustainable development commitments.

The SDGs of relevance to the protection of the swales are Goal 13 on Climate Action, Goal 14 on Life Below Water, and Goal 15 on Life on Land. In addition, the 1976 (UN World Heritage) Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage⁴, to which Canada is a signatory, must be considered. Under article 5.4 of this Convention, Canada has committed “to take appropriate, legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, preservation, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this [cultural and natural] heritage.”

Regarding the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and related SDGs #14 and #15 (see above), the work of the Meewasin Valley Authority has identified that the swales are home to several rare, endangered, or culturally significant species of plants, birds, and amphibians, such as the Western Red Lily, the Horned Grebe and the Northern Leopard Frog. As well, the swales include artifacts of our cultural history, including a remnant of the Moose Woods – Batoche Trail, tipi rings and the old town of Clarkboro, among others. If development on this landscape is not done with care, we risk losing thousands of years of natural and cultural history and the educational opportunities this affords for future generations.

¹ UN University, “RCE Vision and Mission,” available from: <https://www.rcenetwork.org/portal/rce-vision-and-mission>.

² UNESCO, “Global Action Programme on ESD.” Available from: <https://en.unesco.org/gap>.

³ UN, “Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World.” Available from: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.


⁴ Canada accepted the Convention on July 23, 1976. See States Parties Ratification Status at <https://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=246>

Regarding SDG #13 “Climate Action,” development in the Northeast Swale must be evaluated through the lens of climate change. Both wetlands and grasslands have important roles to play in both climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition to providing natural drainage and flood control—something increasingly important with extreme weather events, wetlands are a recognized asset in carbon sequestration. Ducks Unlimited Canada estimates that Canada’s wetlands store approximately 150 billion tonnes of carbon⁵ and scientists have identified that wetland restoration in the prairie provinces could make a significant contribution to greenhouse gas mitigation.⁶ We’ve lost an estimated 70-90% of our wetlands and we continue to lose more. It is critical to protect those wetlands that remain. Like wetlands, grasslands are recognized as critical to carbon sequestration⁷, yet are severely threatened with less than 10% remaining intact⁸ worldwide. From the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) to the 2016 Paris Accord within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to commitments from all levels of government in Canada, the need to address climate change is irrefutable.

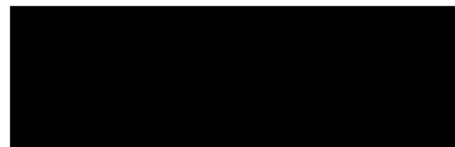
Given the cultural and natural heritage of the swales, together with its potential contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation, any development must proceed cautiously with a view to a sustainable future. This is why we support the recommendations of the Swale Watchers regarding the protection of this critical landscape.

We will be sharing this letter and any updates with our RCE membership in Saskatchewan and our global RCE colleagues, along with relevant non-governmental, municipal, provincial and federal authorities for their information.

Sincerely,



Dr. Roger Petry, Co-coordinator
RCE Saskatchewan (www.saskrce.ca)



Margret Asmuss, Co-coordinator
RCE Saskatchewan (www.saskrce.ca)



Cc Swale Watchers, Saskatoon
Dr. Charles Hopkins, Regional Advisor for RCEs in the Americas
United Nations Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)
RCE Saskatchewan Partners and Members

5 <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/01/31/1708736/0/en/Making-the-connection-between-wetlands-and-climate-change.html>

6 <https://cbmjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13021-018-0094-4>,
<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/01/31/1708736/0/en/Making-the-connection-between-wetlands-and-climate-change.html>

7 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/ccrc/topics/grassland-carbon-management>

8 <https://www.popsoci.com/grasslands-disappearing-chart/>